BLACK FLAG

FOR ANARCHIST RESISTANCE

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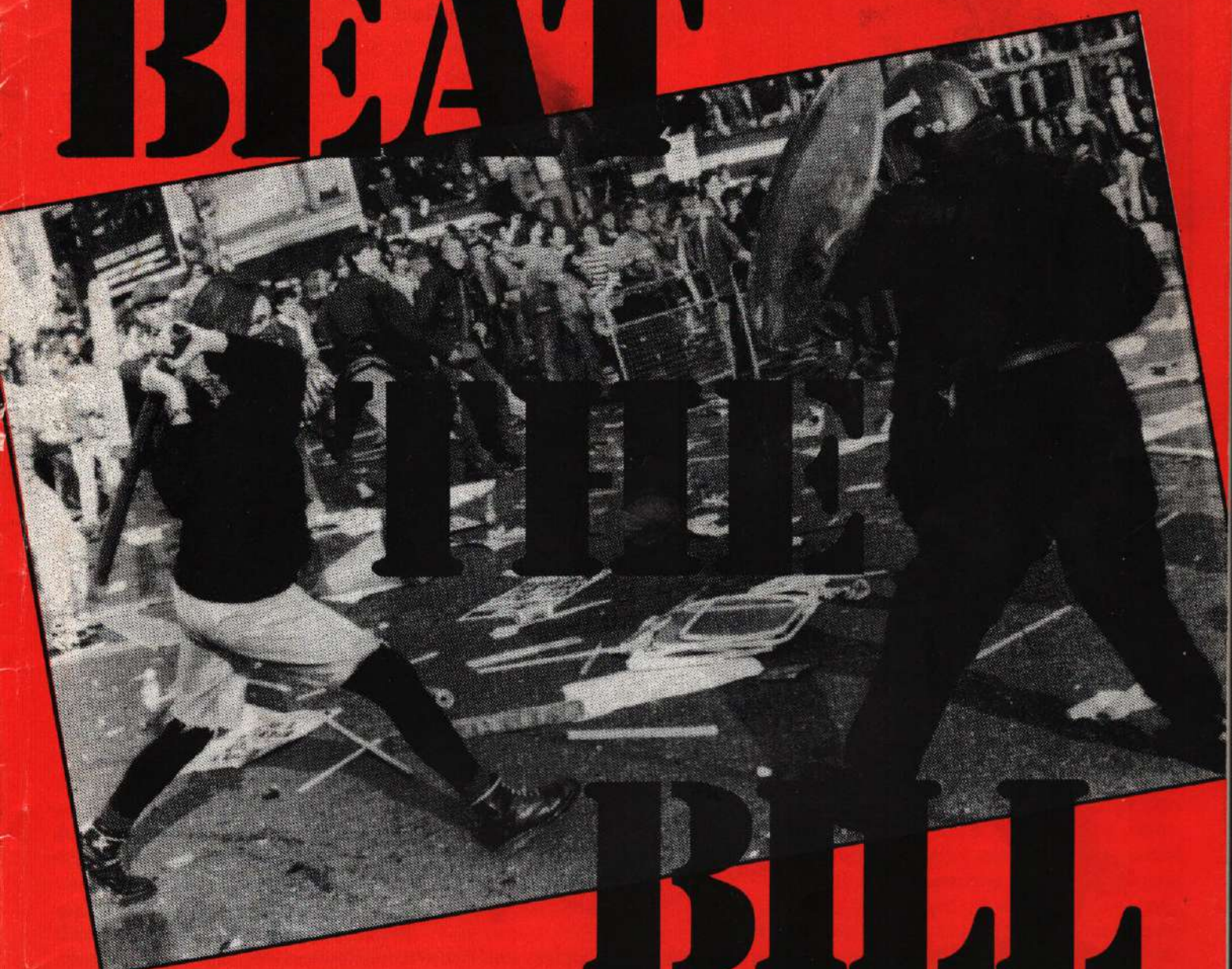
ISSUE 205 AUTUMN 1994

BEAT THE BILL



Fighting the Criminal Justice Bill

Inside: Noam Chomsky on the Zapatista Uprising, Crime and Punishment, News and Views from the Anarchist movement in Britain and around the world

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SIGNAL WORKERS STRIKE UPDATE

SINCE JUNE, signal workers on the railways have been staging a series of one and two-day strikes. They are taking action in support of a pay claim and for recognition of past productivity improvements. The signal workers, members of the Rail Marine and Transport Union (RMT) have followed the anti-union laws to the letter in terms of ballots. The bosses, Railtrack, originally tabled a 5.7% offer which they subsequently withdrew after pressure from the government.

The media have remained aloof up till now, are beginning to talk about the workers' holding the country to ransom and other such reactionary garbage. This is a problem as the RMT's strategy is one of keeping public opinion on their side. This was seen to fail with the ambulance workers, who at one point had 97% public support, and still lost.

To succeed the dispute needs to be spread to other grades. Local depots should be balloting on health and safety grounds during strike days. This applies particularly to guards and trackworkers who should be demanding health and safety guarantees from bosses. There is also going to be a reballoting of the supervisors. The previous ballot was lost as all workers of the supervisor grade were balloted, however, this time the ballot will be coducted at depot level and the supervisors should be out by the end of September.

There have been sporadic instances of sabotage and in places the bosses have called the police in to interview signal workers. Inspiration can be drawn from the 1926 General Strike when tracks were removed from lines in the North East to stop scabbing.

The longer the strike goes on the harder it is going to get for the workers, but things are worse for the bosses and the government. In an industry that is already undercapitalised the cost of the strike so far is estimated at £500 million - a bill any potential buyer in its forthcoming privatisation bar the government would be unable to afford.

How Long before it happens again?

Oxford Squatters fight back

On Monday 1st August police ran riot in East Oxford, attacking two recently opened squats. In the afternoon squatters in a cinema were attcked by police and arrested. They were detained at the police station and later released without charge - unfortunately for the police the Criminal Justice Bill is not law yet and squatting is not a criminal offence.

Having carried out this pointless operation, the police then set their sights on evicting East Avenue House, a Health Authority Building which had been empty for 4 years. At 6.30 the police arrived, cordoned off the area, donned helmets and riot shields and as two attacked the front door with crowbar and boltcroppers, the rest stomped across a neighbour's garden to approach the house from behind. A neighbour taking photographs was hit and pushed off the wall she was standing on - she is now suing the police for assault. Having broken in the police arrested everyone and delivered several beatings in the process.

Local people immediately went to the police station to protest and soon the crowd had swelled to around a hundred. The community minded Oxford police soon responded with a line of truncheon wielding cops and dogs repeatedly charging the crowd until everyone was either injured, arrested or had fled. To finish off the evening, the police patrolled the area arresting anyone who looked they might be a squatter (i.e. vaguely scruffy).

A well attended public meeting took place a couple of days later where a bust fund was set up, solicitors were asked to help sue the police for the unlawful evictions and assaults and a demonstration called for the following Saturday.

The 200 strong demo was a great success. The cops were determined to lead the march to an isolated skating rink, but the demonstrators had different ideas. Once at the rink they broke up and regrouped 10 minutes later in the town centre. Leaflets were given out to a sympathetic public, whilst the police panicked and cordoned off the area, warning shoppers to disperse as 'things could get violent'. Police horses were brought in and it was obvious that the police were furious, but were unable to do anything with hundreds of Saturday shoppers watching the proceedings. In the end the police removed the cordons and simply left the area. The demonstration happily marched through the centre all the way back to East Oxford, unhindered by police.

SOLIDARITY FEDERATION FORMED

IN MARCH this year a new anarcho-Syndicalist federation was established, a joining together of the *Direct Action Movement (DAM)* and the industrial networks established in Transport, Education and Public Service. This is a huge step forward for the Anarcho-Syndicalist and anarchist movements in this country. The new federation gives what has been lacking in these movements for many years; a concrete base in the working class, uniting the struggles in the workplace and the wider political struggle. In other words a revolutionary social and economic organisation.

There is no pretence that this is a 'real' Anarcho-Syndicalist union federation, but it is a significant step towards this aim. It has been recognised that it would be foolish to attempt to establish organisations that call themselves unions immediately, for the obvious reason how can you call 50 people a union! But a network of like minded militant workers can not only be effective in producing information and comment, but can actively organise some actions and, obviously as the networks grow in members and influence the scope for action grows. The networks already have established a reputation in their industries and are beginning to show real results in membership and effectiveness. .

The federation is not just organised through the networks, it also organises locally through federation 'Locals'. The locals are made up of network members and members who don't currently have a network for their particular industry. The work of the locals is varied; general solidarity with the networks and other workers, local political campaigning such as Anti-Fascism, local environmental campaigns and so forth, as well producing local bulletins and other anarcho-Syndicalist propaganda. Many of the already established locals are working towards creating an actual building for the local to be based, the Norwich local has already done this with the Solidarity Centre.

The federation has become the British section of the *IWA*, giving it the strength of international solidarity, experience from the larger sections such as the *CNT* in Spain and *USI* in Italy as well as sections of a similar size who are moving on from being propaganda sections, (like the *DAM* was), to proper industrial and social organisations.

The future for the federation looks healthy, it's creation has come as a breath of fresh air for the rather staid and inward looking 'Anarcho-Syndicalist and Anarchist movements' in this country. The only thing that will hold back the federation is the political and historical "train spotting" and infighting that has dogged the movement for so long. Comrades who have drifted away from what was the *DAM* (which after all was only a propaganda organisation that grew into a "Anarcho-Syndicalist club"), may wish to look at the **Solidarity Federation** which is what many people complained was lacking, a forward looking organisation based on Solidarity and Direct Action. For more information on the **Solidarity Federation** or the **Networks** then write to: **The Solidarity Federation, PO Box 29, SWPDO, Manchester, M15 5HW**

Shaun Ellis

Ten Days of 'Anarchy'?

AT THE last anarchist bookfair in October '93, a leaflet was circulated by Class War founder Ian Bone, calling for a major anarchist festival from October 21st to the 30th this year. Since then, lots of groups and individuals' support has been solicited and a first programme produced.

The programme - *Anarchy In The UK - Ten Days That Shook The World* lists participants, people the organisers hope to get, what's on so far, and appeals. We were interested to note that one member of our collective was down as a participant even though he hadn't agreed to any such thing. Nor is he the only one - a number of other groups haven't agreed to anything. And the "anarchist net" has been cast pretty wide judging by some of the catch. I mean, Glen Matlock? The Green Party Homeless Campaign? Worst of all is Spiral Tribe, a bunch of capitalists who rip people off by claiming to raise money for homeless campaigns, none of whom have ever seen a penny from a single overpriced rave.

This sort of thing has two effects. People listed either feel morally obliged to participate or they slag the whole thing off. This is a very subtle form of guilt-trip, something we as anarchists are trying to get away from, surely?

The other major criticism I have is of the whole orientation, which is towards the media. Using the mass media to popularise anarchist ideas is a long-standing tactic of Bone's. He used it a lot when he was in Class War, but the question needs to be asked how appropriate it is. Ultimately, it means getting sucked into the media's agenda which is very different to ours.

In his first leaflet, Bone invited people to slag him off. His *Anarchy In The UK* (and it is very much his, as he arrogantly states no one else could do it) will happen. Events that would happen anyway, such as the anarchist bookfair, may be strengthened. Some people will do things to coincide with the event, and try to reap benefit from the publicity. Others may get off their backsides and organise things they have been meaning to for ages. And the media will draw out what it wants, to ridicule and marginalise us, whilst ignoring any real message. A series of events centred in London will be more visible, but it will not bring our ideas into communities and workplaces. That task involves long, painstaking and above all unglamorous work. It is rarely media friendly. But it's a lot more important.

Mike Ward

McLIBEL TWO CONTINUE DEFIANCE

IN 1990, the $24 billion fast food multinational McDonalds, began it's libel action against London Greenpeace supporters Dave Morris and Helen Steel. London Greenpeace, an anarchist group unconnected to the environmental campaigners Greenpeace, had started a campaign against McDonalds in 1984. Their factsheet - *What's Wrong with McDonalds*, which is still available, laid bare McDonalds' exploitation of workers, animals and the environment and their promotion of unhealthy food.

The multinational is throwing its full weight behind the libel action, while Morris and Steel are unemployed and legal aid is not available to them. The burger barons have tried to wear the two down - this has included the exclusion of evidence damaging to McDonalds, refusing to produce documents necessary for the defence and arguing that the case cannot be heard by a jury as it is too "technical". However, Morris and Steel have won an appeal against McDonald's refusalto release documents. Aside from the obvious patronising crap that this is, it shows how scared McDonalds are of the ordinary public finding out about them. The trial can only be heard by a judge, who presumably eats in posh restaurants, and not by the sort of people who might actually eat in a McDonalds.

The Law Lords rejected a bid for an appeal by the defendants against the denial of a jury. After this ruling, Dave Morris said: "This only makes us more determined to stand up to oppressive libel laws". These laws exist to protect the rich and powerful, they have nothing to do with the truth. McDonalds have, in the past, silenced the Scottish TUC, The Guardian and Channel 4. They will not silence their anarchist critics, who have pledged to continue to attack their practices whatever the outcome of the case.

The case has been in recess since August 3rd and will resume at the High Court on Monday 12th September.

Contact: **MCLIBEL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN, c/o London Greenpeace, 5 Caledonian Road, London, N1 9DX Tel: 071-837-7557**

CLOSE CAMPSFIELD!

CAMPSFIELD DETENTION CENTRE, in Kidlington, Oxfordshire, opened at the end of November 1993. Its 200 places more than double the "prison" capacity for asylum seekers and refugees in the UK, fitting in with the wider anti-immigration policies of "Fortress Europe". Campsfield has repeatedly hit the national headlines, beginning with the detention of several Jamaican holiday-makers at Christmas and continuing with a number of escapes and one of the biggest hunger strikes ever seen in this country. By March 11th 1994, 180 Campsfield detainees were on hungerstrike and the protest was spreading to other prisons where refugees were held. This has all proved embarrassing to the state and their jailers from Group 4, who have tried desperately to break the detainees' will to resist by transfers and psychological intimidation. A catalogue of harassment emerges, incuding the following:

* Telling some hunger strikers they will be deported immediately and others that they'll be held an extra nine months and their appeal procedure suspended if they don't give up immediately.
* Harassing visitors to the prison, not allowing them to take food in for their own kids in case it is used to alleviate the strike.
* Taking luxury breakfasts and bowls of fruit into the rooms of hunger strikers to tempt them from their fast.
* Frequent fire drills at all hours of the day and night, plus a 24-hour tannoy system that is driving inmates to distraction.
* Surveillance of any group of four or more detainees gathering together.
* Turning off radiators at night and hourly room checks by security staff.
* Denying access to news reports about the hunger strike, outside protests and resistance in other prisons - in order to make the detainees feel isolated and alone.

Although some refugees initially gained their freedom through the strike, the Home Office has since shown a callous cynicism towards the hunger strikers and was quite prepared to wait for them to go into coma and then transfer them to NHS hospitals where they could be force-fed. However, the detainees are equally prepared to adopt an on-off programme of strike - some of them have been locked up for over a year in the UK, and they recognise they're in for a long fight. Their basic demand is that they be allowed freedom in the community whilst their case for Asylum is heard.

Solidarity with those detained in Campsfield has been organised through two bodies. Firstly there is the broad-based "Campsfield Forum" which draws together the Red Cross and Refugee organisations and is primarily concerned with welfare and support for the detainees. Secondly there is the "Campaign to Close Campsfield" which demands "No Detentions, No Deportations and Close Campsfield!".

To this end it has carried out a number of lobbies and protests, both in the centre of Oxford and outside the prison gates. One of the largest Kidlington protests took place on Saturday 26th March when 150+ people attended the regular demonstration. A wide variety of groups and unions were represented, not to mention a number of Algerians who had already been released from the concentration camp as a result of hunger striking.

The protest was effective as a show of solidarity with the refugees, whilst completely exposing Group 4's inability to handle the situation. Hardly surprising that the media tried to distort what was a largely good-natured protest by frequent references to "anger", "violence" and "professional

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BNP–Down but not out

THE MAY local council elections were a disappointment for the fascist British National Party and their bonehead chums at the National Front. Apart from the pre-election results of a letter bomb at their rathole in Welling, they suffered one lost eye and a broken arm. And that's all that we know about yet! On the night they also lost their one council seat on the Isle of Dogs in East London. Obviously we're pleased about this, but there's no room for complacency.

On a 70% turnout, high because Labour and church groups made efforts to get their vote out despite intimidation, the BNP actually increased their number of votes to 2000. There are a number of things going on here, and we need to understand them to know how to react.

Firstly, Labour has run the Isle of Dogs since living memory. Before the Liberals took over in 1986, Labour had presided over appalling housing developments and the general neglect of the area. The much feted developments such as Canary Wharf have completely passed the locals by. These conditions were ideal for fascists to exploit, by blaming east London's large Bengali community. As usual, the racists are wrong on all the so-called facts they have. Recent studies have shown that Bengalis get worse housing than whites, but many Islanders are just listening to their own grievances, not the reality.

The attitude of the left has compounded this alienation. Since the BNP's Derek Beackon was elected in 1993, students and social workers have converged on the Island to patronise locals about voting for the BNP, telling them all along that they should have voted Labour. The BNP have been able to present a radical face to disaffected whites who know full well how hollow Labour's promises are. Labour now have another four years in which to prove themselves to the Isle of Dogs. Don't be surprised when they fail. Even if they want to, they are hamstrung by central government restrictions on spending. Fighting those is a political fight that Labour don't have the stomach for.

The question for those genuine revolutionaries and anti-fascists on the Isle of Dogs must be one of grass roots organisation. The mistakes of the past must be admitted to and a degree of honesty shown with our fellow workers. This is hard work, and comrades who undertake it deserve our full support, wherever they are coming from. But if it isn't done, it will be a lot harder when the BNP return for the next election.

Mike Ward

Blacklisters Back

THE ECONOMIC League flourished for nearly sixty years unchallenged. It was a sneak-fascist spy organisation that blacklisted people for their opinions or their activity at work. It left families destitute, breadwinners unable ever to work again anywhere, wrecking homes and communities. When *Leaguewatch* was created it wakened trade unionists and the media. As a result the Economic League collapsed with £300,000 debts, because firms withdrew their subscriptions.

Now, true to the City tradition, the same directors of the bankrupt EL, with the same aims,files and assets, have started up again under another name, CAPRIM. An entirely different firm, you understand.

They are too useful to the capitalists for the loss of a third of a million to be held against them, except by their creditors who can do bugger-all about it. But if their subscribers face a fresh boycott CAPRIM may finish in Carey Street too.

FRANCE

AT NANTERRE University on April 28th, a symposium on the topic of "Germanophilia, Germanophobia - Germany in Question" was organised. The organiser, Monsieur Korniman invited, among others, Ludwig Watzal, an ultraconservative intellectual with links to Manfred Brunner's BfB, which wants to fill the political space between the Christian Democrats and the extreme right (Republikaner / DVU).

About 50 militants from the CNT (French anarcho-syndicalist union) and SCALP-Reflex (anti-fascist groups) intervened, shouting anti-fascist slogans and showering the rostrum with proof of Watzal's extreme right links.

While Korniman denied that the BfB was part of the extreme right, he stopped the symposium. After this, the militants accompanied Watzal to the station, chanting slogans and verballing him.

The University has attacked the anti-fascists, for using violence against Watzal. This obscures the real issue - the debate between left and new right intellectuals. forms part of the strategy of the new right, which is to gain intellectual respectability for its ideas. The New Right is a laboratory of ideas for the rest of the right. It introduces themes into right wing circles. The CNT is strongly opposed to this collusion and hopes this action serves as a reminder to those who debate with such people, while others are putting the logic of their ideas into practice with flames in the hallways of immigrants in Rostock, in Solingen.....

Section FAU, Education Union, CNT.

(From *Combat Syndicaliste*)

RECLAIM MAY DAY 1995!

A CALL HAS come from our comrades in the *Workers Solidarity Alliance* (American section of the *International Workers Association*) and *Neither East Nor West* in New York to organise a day of action against the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) on or around Monday May 1st.

The end of Stalinist tyranny has only led to the whole world coming together under one global system of exploitation managed by the IMF and World Bank. This capitalist tyranny is backed up by the military might of the United Nations, the US and virtually all of the government's of the world. That this has happened is no accident, the Bretton Woods Agreement of 1944 created them to form a capitalist international. Communist and Third World Nationalist bureaucracies gradually became collaborators with the IMF/WB, using foreign debts to discipline their working class.

Our American comrades have chosen May 1st to reclaim the tradition of worldwide working class unity on this day. The May Day tradition has become somewhat hollow for those raised on Stalinist war parades, empty leftist marches in Europe and Law and Order Day in the US. More than ever we need to work together independent of official borders. They hope that internationally co-ordinated actions will expand on the work activists are already doing against these institutions. The choice of May Day also builds on an older tradition of celebrating the annual reawakening of the earth in spring. It is time to reclaim our planet from its desecrators who exploit and expropriate us.

Co-ordinated action, as is proposed, and which we here at *Black Flag* fully support, will also help to bring people in richer countries attention to the actions and role of the IMF/WB. Throughout the world, growing homelessness, loss of land and jobs, destruction of communities, cuts in social and education spending, creation of artificial famines and the repression of workers are all growing as a result of IMF/WB policies. The increased pace of the class war as waged by the rich in Britain began not with Thatcher, but with the IMF-imposed policies of Labour in 1977.

The role of the World Bank and IMF in imposing "market forces" and western priorities onto other countries, with disastrous affects for the workers and poor there. This process goes under many names, whether privatisation, structural adjustment, or just plain "development". However, there have been protests against

this process ranging from all over the world, with perhaps the most inspiring being the uprising in Chiapas. (See the piece by Noam Chomsky in this issue on the economics of NAFTA and the uprising).

What is clear, though, is that the statist solutions of the past will not work. Nearly every government in the world has capitulated to the IMF/WB and imposed austerity. Only a movement without governments can succeed in freeing all our lives from the authoritarianism that desperate people are looking to. It is on coincidence that the increase in nationalism comes at a time when national governents have less and less say in the running of their economies, which are dictated by the needs of the international market.

Black Flag will be convening a meeting at the Anarchist Bookfair in London in October to start to get something together in Britain. We want this to be as wide ranging and positive as possible. Write to us with suggestions or ideas.

WSA & NENW - New York would like to hear from people internationally who propose getting involved. They stress they are not organising this, they are co-ordinating it. An IMF/WB pack may be available from them in the future, write to them at:

WSA NENW,
339 Lafayette St, Rm 202,
New York,
New York 10012,
USA.

BANGLADESH

THE *National Garment Workers Federation (NGWF)* (see *#204*) has launched a campaign for a festival bonus. By law, Bangladesh workers receive a bonus equal to a month's pay for the holiday of Eid. This has been ignored by the garment industry and the government hasn't enforced it.

Last year the NGWF had a major victory when May Day was won as a paid holiday. They have also won a number of local disputes by direct action tactics, such as occupations.

An appeal to aid the NGWF has so far raised £106. Please send cheques/POs payable to "Deptford DAM" to:

NGWF Appeal, BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX

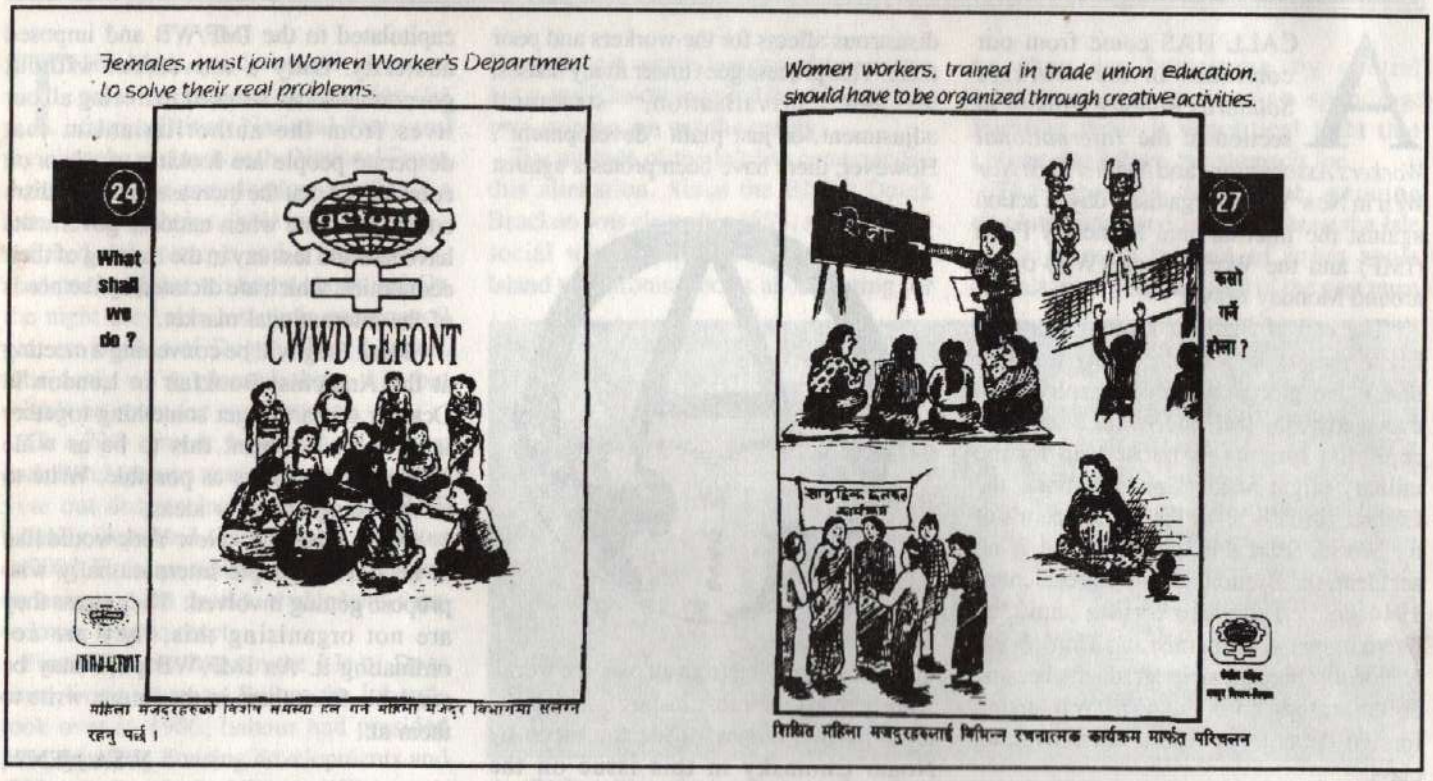
SPAIN

ON THE 27th January, a major general strike was called in Spain by the "socialist" union UGT. It was against a package of anti-worker laws, in particular aimed at young workers. The unions claimed that 90% came out, while the bosses claimed 30%. Most of the major industries were shut down and those that tried to open were heavily picketed.

In Barcelona there was a massive demonstration of around 200,000 people on which the CNT - the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist union affiliated to the International Workers Association - had a large and vociferous presence. There were other demos in Madrid, Granada, Zaragoza and many others. In the Basque region there was full scale rioting.

There was a massive campaign against the workers by the media before, during and after the strike. On the day one radio station claimed, 'everything open....just like any other working day.' There was also heavy police provocation, but the stike was a great success- the economic reality countering the lies of the press.

TRADE UNIONS IN NEPAL



UNTIL THE 1980s, Nepal was still a feudal monarchy. King Birendra came under increasing popular pressure as the World Bank/IMF forced a "structural adjustment" programme on the country. In February 1990, a centre-left coalition started a campaign for basic political reforms.

In April, the campaign bore fruit and the king appointed an interim government headed by the Nepali Congress Party leader Bhattarai and included the communists. Elections in May '91 gave Congress a majority, but the communist CPN-UML emerged as a strong opposition. Congress maintained the IMF policies. Against this background, workers have organised more successfully and the *General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT)* won some important victories.

Anarchists and Syndicalists probably first heard of GEFONT during last year's dispute at the Nepali Battery Company, a subsiduary of Union Carbide (remember Bhopal?). Solidarity from anarchists and syndicalists was recognised by GEFONT as playing an important part in their victory. Last year a victory was also achieved for women government employees, who won half a day's leave on March 8th, International Womens' Day. And as publicised in *Black Flag #204*, there is an ongoing strike at a hotel in the Royal Chitwan National Park.

What is interesting about GEFONT and their political allies in the CPN-UML, are the debates and activities they are engaged in. The programme of the CPN-UML makes a number of moves away from classic Marxist-Leninism. These are influenced both by the concrete difficulties facing workers in Nepal and a wider debate amongst those sectors of the international labour movement influenced by the now-defunct Soviet Union. At times these trends can expose contradictions. For example, the acceptance of multi-party democracy is effectively a recognition of different ideologies within the working class, as well as a tactical measure.

At the same time compensation is promised for expropriated feudal landlords, which would merely enable them to keep their privileges, albeit without their land.

In the light of these debates, GEFONT is planning a conference on the subject of fighting privatisation. Primarily aimed at South Asian unions, they are seeking solutions and methods to fight the privatisation programmes imposed by the World Bank, IMF and international financial markets.

Although as anarchists we are against the State, we are opposed to privatisation as it represents the introduction of capitalist market relations into more areas of life. Its purpose is to enrich speculators on the international stock exchanges. Its effect is obviously detrimental to the workers, as we have seen here with every industry privatised so far. GEFONT has also chosen to stay outside the main trade union internationals, the communist WFTU and the social democrats/Christian ICFTU.

GEFONTs women's section has also carried out a training programme and organising campaign amongst women workers. Part of the campaign includes an illustrated booklet in English and Nepali. This imaginative organising tool is very useful in areas of low literacy and covers a wide range of basic concerns, such as inequality, harassment, maternity rights and working conditions.

The growing union movement in Asia, where industrialisation is ongoing, has many parallels to the Syndicalist movements of the early 20th century. As anarchists we may disagree with some of the things they say or do, but they are fighting the class war at the sharp end. They deserve our support and solidarity, while we can draw inspiration from their struggles.

Mike Ward

INTERVIEW WITH PEPE AND LOURDES OF THE IWA SECRETARIAT

The **IWA (International Workers Association)** the anarcho-syndicalist International, held a plenary and conference at the beginning of April. The International was founded in 1922, after French and Spanish syndicalists had visited Russia and seen the full effect of the Bolshevik counter-revolution. Most of the unions were crushed by fascism in the Thirties and Forties, or by Stalinist Terror as in Bulgaria, but dedicated groups of workers and exiles kept the flame alive. There was a resurgence in the '70s, after Franco died and the CNT reorganised, giving inspiration abroad. Today, there are 3 union sections, the French and Spanish CNTs and the Italian USI, as well as propaganda sections in Britain, Germany, Finland, Norway, the USA, Australia, Brazil and Argentina. With the collapse of Stalinism and the rightward drift in so many social democratic or former communist labour movements, new opportunities have arisen for the IWA. These are being vigorously pursued, despite limited resources, by the IWA Secretariat.

Black Flag took the opportunity to interview two members of the Secretariat about their work and efforts to expand our ideas to more workers.

BF: You've been the Secretariat of the IWA for two years now. Could you give us an idea of how it's been going?
P: My personal impression is that I've found some lack of knowledge of anarcho-syndicalist principles and tactics in some of the sections. For example, we have seen different tactics adopted by sections because of the differing situations in their countries. I would like to stress that we see ourselves as radical but not purist in defending the IWA's principles.

BF: Some sections have disappeared. Do you have any thoughts on this?
P: The sections which disappeared were small and didn't operate as constituted organisations. For example, the Bulgarian section was comprised of veteran exiles in Paris, who weren't organised as a proper section. We now have more contacts among Bulgarian youth in Sofia than there were members of the Bulgarian exile section.
The Japanese section also folded, but reorganised as the ARP, with which we continue to maintain contact. New contacts have been made in Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa. We recently held a meeting in Milan with tribal leaders from the south of Somalia. These discussions were constructive and a part of our normal work.
L: A comrade from the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean who has been living in Germany has told us of a growing movement there. There was a small congress for anarcho-syndicalism held there, but it is very difficult to get information because of the repression.
P: Also through the FAU (German section - Free Workers Union) we have established contacts in Prague in the Czech Republic. The Secretariat and Mona from the FAU visited the former Soviet Union, with the latter attending the Kropotkin conference in Moscow.

BF: That sounds positive. Are there any other contacts in Europe?
P: There are comrades in Portugal who work within the anarchist movement, with whom the CNT (Spanish section - National Confederation of Labour) and I have contact. They are trying to build an anarcho-syndicalist section, perhaps on their own, perhaps as part of the CNT.

BF: What about Latin America? There was a lot of contact with the Brazilian COB a few years ago, what's happening with them?
P: The problems with COB (Brazilian Workers Confederation) are not organisational, but logistical. The distances involved are too far, and the expense too much. A comrade of the COB did come to Barcelona last year. A new group has started in the FORA (Regional Federation of Argentine Workers) in Rosario. We have contacts with the Peruvian mineworkers union, though this is difficult because of the situation there, as well as contact with small or reduced groups in most other Latin American countries.

BF: What is the status of the COB? Does it organise workers or is it mainly engaged in propaganda?
P: My personal opinion is that you can't call it a syndicalist movement any more because it's no longer a question of

continued over

fighting in a syndicalist way, more one of propaganda.
L: It is like a general movement for organising workers' rights, but not in a specific workplace.

BF: Is that all that is possible in Brazil, or will COB become a union in the future?
P: The intention of the COB is to create syndicalist organisations as the basis of

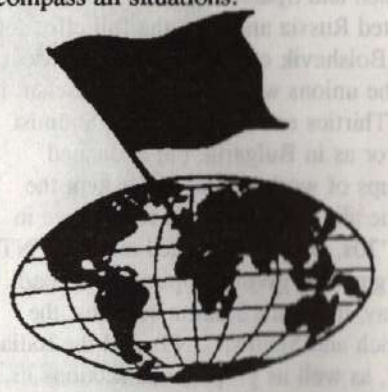
BF: I understand you visited Nigeria. Could you tell us about that?
L: It's difficult to explain the whole visit, both because so much happened and also the need for security for the people we met there. Pepe has written a report which will be circulated to all sections.
(BF note: Pepe and Lourdes and some of the comrades they met were at one point arrested at gunpoint. They were at pains to point out throughout the interview how dangerous the situation in Nigeria is, and the bravery and courage shown by the comrades there).
L: We can talk about our meeting with an educational league there, whose members are mainly concentrated in the South East, or Biafra. They want to learn more about the IWA and our principles and tactics.
P: To give some background, since the second world war there has been an influx of ideas and organisations into Nigeria. These have been religious, communist, government agencies particularly from Britain and Germany. All have been interested in exploiting Nigeria's resources. One of the results was the revolution of Biafra in the 60s.
L: Biafra was a movement of self-determination and was crushed by the army. It was a result of the legacy of British colonialism, which only ended in 1960. Biafrans wanted to maintain their culture and independence.

BF: Was it not also about ethnic tensions between the different tribes?
L: Obviously there is a quest for individual identities but we didn't get the impression that there were tensions.
P: I think you have had a lot of media disinformation here about Biafra. Since 1975, when Murtalla Muhammed was assassinated by the military, there have been a series of dictators from various tribes. On an individual level those tensions don't exist, it is propaganda from the ruling class. It's the same in Somalia - divide and rule.
L: It's a way of distracting people from their real problems. The people we met were aware of the problems imposed because of this, and try to work through them

BF: How did people in Nigeria come to be interested in ideas of anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism?
P: Firstly, their culture is very different. There were inflluences at the time of Biafra from all over - a big melting pot of Marx, Lenin and anarchism. There still exist doubts and confusions over direction, but we visited to try to clarify our ideas to them. Oil and water can be mixed up if you shake them, but will separate out. So it is with our ideas in Nigeria. We don't tell them what to think or do - we do not want to make them slaves of western culture, they have their own.
There was a lot of communication between Lourdes and the women she met, especially over issues of sexual relations and health. Women marry at 14 and are considered old by 25. Infant mortality is high. But they seek to improve their standard of living.
L: They want general basic information on women's liberation, for example housework, fetching water, fertility control. We explained basic ideas of women's liberation and feminism and the men were more receptive than they would have been in Europe.
There were sometimes no women present at meetings but I met them later. It was heartening to see them take on womens' struggle in such a macho society.

BF: What can the IWA offer people in the third world?
P: In four words, information to be free.
L: In the third world, the state tries to empty stomachs and stop thought. At present we can offer ideas, material support may be possible in the future. They can offer us their victory in attaining freedom.

BF: How flexible is the IWA when faced with non-European cultures?
P: In my opinion, even though the IWA has European roots, our anarchist principles are based on liberty. Capitalism is global, there's no need for us to alter our statutes to accomodate anyone else.
L: We must stick to our ideas and avoid co-operating with the State. This can encompass all situations.



Agents Provocateur or Brainless Scum

Searchlight - the anti-fascist magazine with links to Special Branch - has a long anti-anarchist history. Always using doubtful and third-hand information they go out of their way to try and discredit anarchists and active anti-fascists.

At the beginning of the year in an article called 'Agent provocateurs or brainless scum', they accuse Danish anti-fascists attending a demo in Sweden of carrying bombs, plastic explosive and handgrenades - information straight from the police and never checked.The Danes were carrying no 'bombs', but fireworks and maroons which they have used on demos for a number of years.They also accuse them of being infiltrated by police or fascist agents.

Why does *Searchlight* take police information without question and yet not allow the Danes to state their case, calling them "sick in their heads and a bunch of lunatics"? Yet again *Searchlight* has shown that it is untrustworthy as an anti-fascist magazine showing complete disrespect for established and active anti-fascists. Who are really the agent provocateurs?

More info:Anti-Fascist Aktion, Copenhagen, c/o Kafa-X, Blågårdsgade 12, 2200Copenhagen N, Denmark

CRIMINAL INJUSTICE

Barring invasion from another planet, the Criminal Justice Bill (CJB) will become law in October. Despite widespread concern about it, opposition to it is still fragmented and many people do not realise what it means for them. In a classic case of divide and rule, the Government has targetted "unpopular" groups such as squatters, travellers and gypsies, to bring in legislation that will be used against the working class as a whole.

This article looks at what the CJB is (briefly) and what needs to be done to support and enlarge on resistance to it. In doing so, I acknowledge that crime is a real issue for many working class people, who are the usual victims. As anarchists we need to address crime as something that represses working class people, whether as victims of crime itself, or as victims of the so-called justice system.

The efforts of the various reformists trying to stop the bill in Parliament have failed. In part, this is due to Tory Blair trying to hijack the law and order ticket from the Tories. It cannot be stopped by legalistic means, it must be made unworkable by direct action.

The main areas of concern about the CJB are as follows.

•Travellers can be asked to leave a site even where they had the landowners' permission, if there are more than 6 vehicles. This can now also be done by a local authority, as well as the police. Local authorities will no longer have a duty to provide sites for travellers.

•It criminalises raves and potentially any other open air parties, whether on private land or not. A related clause gives police powers to stop and turn back anyone within five miles of such an event.

•Any assembly of more than 20 people on a highway or any land without the owner's permission can be prohibited at the request of the police. This could cover an area up to 78 square miles. Anyone inciting or organising such an event could be jailed. A related clause gives police the same powers to stop and turn back as with raves. Clause 63, supposedly aimed at Hunt saboteurs, makes it an offence to try to disrupt any activity in the open air, even if the activity itself is illegal, such as dumping toxic waste. Anyone on private land will be trespassing unless the owner consents. This makes illegal any demonstration that takes place in sight or sound of the activity which you are demonstrating against, except for a handful of people silently holding hands.

•There is provision to seize vehicles and sound equipment, which will be impounded or confiscated if a conviction is successful. The charges for getting vehicles (which are some peoples' homes) out of the pound are likely to be extortionate.

•Landlords will be allowed to use or threaten violence to get out squatters. If a squatter refuses to leave, they could be imprisoned. Landlords can also apply for interim possession orders without telling the squatters, and anyone failing to leave after 24 hours will be guilty of a criminal offence. It will be a criminal offence to get a false interim possession order, but that's not a lot of use if you've been thrown onto the streets.

•Increased powers of stop and search are introduced, marking a return to the old sus laws.

•It increases the number of prisons, and introduces prisons for children, even though they know locking kids up doesn't work. There are new restrictions on the right to silence. Anti-terrorist measures are extended, and DNA fingerprinting is introduced.

It is obvious that at present, these clauses of the bill will be used against their stated targets, squatters, ravers, hunt

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Crime and how to fight it

THE GOVERNMENT face a charge levelled by the Opposition, the bishops and the do-gooders that growing crime, irrelevant to whom it is against, is a consequence of increased poverty. They respond that this insults the unemployed, that during the Great Depression of this century and the rockbottom levels of last century people could still leave their doors unlocked, and that it is all due to this century's declining moral standards, on which Cabinet Ministers are experts. Either way, in the words of the old song, it's the poor as gets the blame.

When people left their doors locked they had damn-all to be taken anyway. The fact of increased crime in times of high unemployment doesn't mean the unemployed are doing the stealing; professional criminals are self-employed, not unemployed.

But people are induced to slave for what were once considered luxuries and were beyond the reach of the majority. Credit and hire-purchase ensure that falling behind in wealth doesn't mean you are automatically without possessions and thus valueless as a customer or victim. What has altered most dramatically in the two decades is how capitalism has adapted to poverty. Crime follows market trends. Improved security measures make robbing the rich more hazardous, and few are so poor they don't have some dole money in their bag for shopping or can't afford a radio. Who is the likelier, in this economic climate, to be victimised?

When the upper classes loses property, they lose what was gained by exploitation or inheritance.

It is unrealistic to suppose that under a capitalist society either the legal or the criminal parasite will ever get off our backs. Just as crime is a business like any other; business is a crime like any other. It happens to operate under conditions of legality which the Government imposes in the interests of capitalism.

The legal parasites can be fought in many ways - by industrial resistance, by consumer boycotts, by fighting bailiffs who take out property away illegally. Can the illlegal parasites be fought off? The last-but-one issue (203) looked at Vigilantes and reluctantly came to the conclusion that if workers had to accept such a system (as some sections of communities already do owing to racial attacks) they should do so reluctantly. However useful at the beginning, Vigilante protectors inevitably become the new oppressors. The real way forward is by citizens militias, under whatever name, differing from the vigilante system by being an organised self-defence for all, not an elite of the well-trained.

How does one get over the gap between theory and reality? How does one get our streets free of the mugger, the vandal, the pusher, the anti-social element, along with the bailiff, the repossession agent and the loan shark, against whom one cannot even call the police?

The first step is to get the community to shout publicly what it's up against.

Criminal Injustice

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saboteurs, new and old travellers and gypsies. However, we don't have to look very far into the past to see where the inspiration for some of this comes from. The restrictions on the rights of striking miners to travel bear resemblance to the clauses on gatherings and raves. The clauses against hunt saboteurs could easily be used against anti-roads demonstrators, or Poll Tax demos in the past.

So, it's pretty bad, what do we do about it? As I stated earlier, any strategy has got to be based on direct action, and mass defiance. Many of these laws will be unworkable if the police get overloaded.

Firstly, anarchists should offer unconditional solidarity to all those affected. If used to their full force, these clauses could result in a lot more anarchist prisoners for a start. But our support must go beyond mere solidarity, and make the links between what is happening and what it means for ordinary working class people. What it means is that activities like effective picketing become even harder. Leafletting outside shops urging boycotts will become impossible. The stop and search provisions will be used largely against black people, but also any other group of working class people that the police hate, such as young people and football fans. And the government has already signalled it wants to stop the increasing number of anti roads protests, even if it means nicking the odd middle class Tory voter. Nothing must stand in the way of their lack of transport policy.

We need to make some basic demands, such as the legalisation of squatting and that councils should provide sites for travellers - all travellers not just gypsies. But we should remember that crime is something defined by the rich and powerful. Unfortunately, many working class people will go along with it because they are afraid of crime.

Organised groups with experience from the Poll Tax campaign can use those lessons in providing proper stewarding and legal observers.

Stewarding is a political function. The left use stewards as police, sometimes even literally if your name is Steve Nally. The function of stewards should be to defend the demonstration against attacks, whether by fascists, the police or anyone else. Obviously this is necessary for future demonstrations that are likely to fall under the CJB, particularly anti-road protests. But stewarding is also a good idea for raves, as they will need defending. If we are not up to it, it's not inconceivable that the far right may step in, despite SWP propaganda.

One of the hardest learnt lessons of the Poll Tax was the need for legal observers. Many people now have the experience and can train others. It is also vital to make sure that correct legal info is got out at the start, particularly as the CJB changes the right to silence. Whatever happens, it looks like the best thing to do is keep quiet until you have a solicitor you trust with you.

What is clear is that we can't sit around and wait for a Labour government, as much of the working class has done for so long, because most of those bastards want the CJB. Resistance against the provisions of the CJB will be a necessity for many people, but it affects all of us. People forced off the road will be competing with the rest of us for scarce resources like housing and jobs. The government are just pandering to bigots, (and hoping to drive down wages at the same time). Resistance will be long and hard, but it is possible to make the CJB unworkable.

MH

The newly-reconstructed South Bristol Anarchists put out a leaflet *Hartcliffe News*. Under the heading *ONLY SCUMBAGS STEAL FROM WORKING CLASS PEOPLE* it read:

"Anyone who read the papers or saw the news last Thursday (19th January) will know about the low-life muggers who did over a couple of old ladies for a poxy tenner, or whatever it was. One of the women was put in hospital. There is no excuse at all for this mugging. Our lives as working class people are hard enough as it is with unemployment, bad housing, low paid jobs etc, without being turned over by gutless vermin. If you're broke, angry and pissed off with society, take your revenge on the people who keep you at the bottom: The Tories, social workers, councillors, politicians, cops etc. You can do what you like in Clifton, Redlands, Sneyd park, Westbury, Stoke Bishop. Nobody will lose any sleep if a few middle class cretins from these areas lose a few quid. BUT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES DO YOU RIP OFF YOUR OWN CLASS. There are loads of ways people can make money without having to steal from members of their own class: shoplifting, dole fiddling, not paying bills, credit card and cheque book scams and so on. This takes a bit of bottle and brains, Mugging old ladies, burgling your neighbours, stealing stereos from cars in working class areas - these things are out of order and need to be punished severely by local people.

"If we want a better Hartcliffe to live in, we have to do it ourselves. We have to make Hartcliffe a no-go area for all out-of-order crime. Two years ago a well known child molester was booted out of his house and had all his gear removed by his neighbours. Those slimeballs who keep on thieving off Hartcliffe people must get the same treatment. The same goes for all those DSS snoopers, TV detector vans, bailiffs, fascists, police etc. IF WE STAND TOGETHER IN HARTCLIFFE AND AS A CLASS, YOUNG AND OLD, MEN AND WOMEN, BLACK AND WHITE - WE ARE UNBEATABLE."

This vigorous statement provoked immediate reaction in the local *Bristol Journal*; "FURY AT CLASS HATE MESSAGE TO RIOT ESTATE. Labour and Tory politicians united last night to condemn a hate leaflet being circulated on a housing estate". The Conservative chairman, Steve Willis called the leaflets "dangerous" and asked the police to "investigate" - not the out of order crime but the call to resist it. The Labour Party brought out a furious counter-leaflet, parodying it with such charges as "printing stupid leaflets and giving them out to the working class only adds to the litter as people throw them away" (except presumably at election times). Couldn't this be solved by giving the Anarchs, with no TV platforrm, access to local radio?

But the leaflet received an excellent response from the locals themselves. This was proved by none other than Steve Willis himself. On March 11th he asked, through the press, that the Anarchists prove their popularity - by standing for election. A crafty move, as the Tories have no hope of being elected in this ward - unless what they obviously regard as a popular faction stand and split the Labour vote! Unfortunately for his hopes, the Anarchists aren't as naive as the Trots.

What is wanted is direct action against a blight that covers Hartcliffe and many other estates in other cities and now even country areas. The City of London has now been saturated with police, and crime (other than business fraud) has disappeared. Said a police spokesman on TV, it has gone elsewhere, as it is not worth the risk, while another said that people must take things into their own hands and not rely on the police. So shouldn't South Bristol workers think on the same lines?

The effects of consumerism on the deprived isn't solved by a few fading Neighbourhood Watch stickers in the window. Stigmatising the anti-social as a prelude to booting them out is a prelude to getting to the point where a no-go area can exist for all anti-social activity, legal or illegal. That is what perturbs the South Bristol politicos, not the fact that somebody might throw away the leaflet on the pavement.

Contact:
SOUTH BRISTOL ANARCHISTS
PO BOX 1076
BRISTOL
BS99 1WF

Alternative Policing Freedom Network Style

AT THE CRIMINAL Justice Bill demo in July, the Freedom Network (a loose coalition of pacifist campaigners against the Criminal Justice Bill) handed out leaflets on the march.

Fair enough, you might think, but these leaflets were encouraging people to look out for "violent fellow demonstrators" and then surround them. Other Freedom Network ideas for preventing violence were to spray them with paint, and in the event of a mounted police charge , to lie down, because, wait for it, horses won't trample people. Tell that to the miners at Orgreave!

The Freedom Network were also hostile to the presence of some hunt saboteurs on the march because, you guessed it, they were "violent" types. Isn't the whole point of the CJB to sneak in anti-working class measures by attacking "unpopular" groups?

Pacifism has a long history of failure in this country. It is not the same as the continental anti-militarism where workers resist conscription and war, but are more than ready to fight the forces of the state when necessary. If these people had been at Orgreave, or Wapping, or even the Battle of the Beanfield, they would know that pacifism is a middle class cop-out from confronting the reality of state power.

NORWICH SOLIDARITY CENTRE

NORWICH SOLIDARITY CENTRE opened in May 1992. The idea had been around much longer, but, as anyone involved in similar projects will know, we had the problem of finding cheap and suitable premises before we could get going.

At the centre there are books, pamphlets, posters and badges for sale. We have information on file on subjects from anti-racism, to squatting, to industrial law. We have a small but growing library and a small but shrinking stash of booze under the table for when meetings go on too long.

We produce an approximately quarterly bulletin, we have occasional visiting speakers, discussion meetings, and also show regular videos. Coming up are ones on the American Indian Movement and the Spanish Revolution (well we couldn't miss that out could we?). Plans to screen a season of Schwarzenegger films have so far met with some resistance.

We hold socials and days out are planned. These are important not only to raise some funds, and for a good laugh, but also so that new or less confident members can meet other centre members in a less formal situation than a meeting. In short the centre has a social or "club" aspect to it which is vital for a local centre to thrive and maintain peoples' interest.

The centre was founded by anarcho-syndicalists in the Norwich area, and has clearly anarcho-syndicalist politics. We didn't set it up to be a general advice or information centre. Such a set-up can all too easily lend itself to a producer/consumer scenario, where those running the centre are expected only to advise those who call in. We do not wish to see this sort of divide set up between working class people when politicians are doing it all the time. We don't see ourselves as experts, we simply offer practical solidarity and the opportunity for centre users to get involved in our activities as equal participants. In practice when people come in to use the centre as a resource, they often get interested in the rest of our activities as well.

Although the Solidarity Centre group itself is specifically anarcho-syndicalist, we are obviously happy for groups we support such as Norwich Anti-Fascist Action and ACT-UP (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power) to use the centre.

People's response in Norwich (and elsewhere) has been encouraging. New members are slowly but steadily joining and old activists have got more interested again, and come out of hibernation. Having a centre, even a small one like ours, gives us an important focus. It shows we mean business, gives us a lot of credibility and has been a unifying factor in the activities of anarcho-syndicalists in the area. The day-to-day running of the centre, and our local activities, are coordinated at fortnightly centre meetings. We also try to support workers and communities in struggle. We've sent donations to Middlesbrook Mushrooms strikers, Peruvian miners in dispute and the Bangladeshi Garment Workers Appeal, amongst others.

We've been looking into the possibility of moving into larger premises with better access facilities - currently a set of stairs and lack of space make access for wheelchair users and people with pushchairs very difficult. As local income rises with membership we hope to tackle this problem. We recently mailed out a detailed questionnaire to ask supporters what they want from the centre and what

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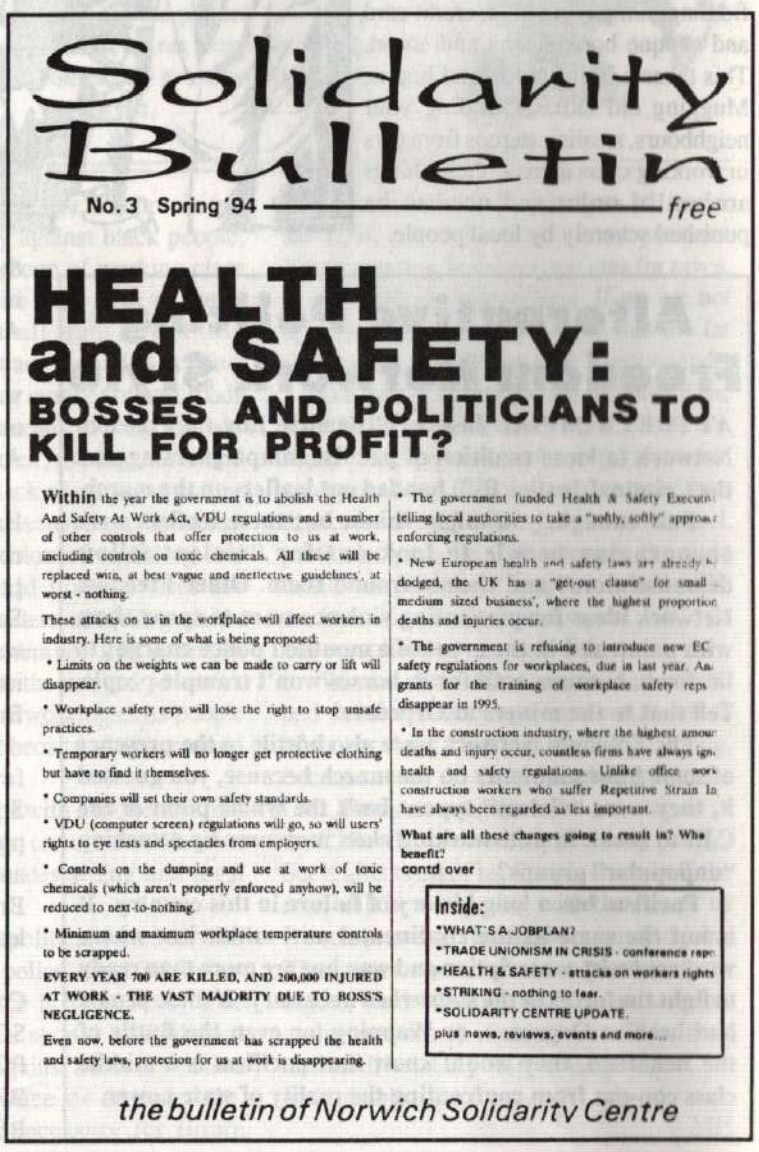

Solidarity Bulletin

No. 3 Spring '94 — free

HEALTH and SAFETY:

BOSSES AND POLITICIANS TO KILL FOR PROFIT?

Within the year the government is to abolish the Health And Safety At Work Act, VDU regulations and a number of other controls that offer protection to us at work, including controls on toxic chemicals. All these will be replaced with, at best vague and ineffective guidelines', at worst - nothing.

These attacks on us in the workplace will affect workers in industry. Here is some of what is being proposed:

* Limits on the weights we can be made to carry or lift will disappear.
* Workplace safety reps will lose the right to stop unsafe practices.
* Temporary workers will no longer get protective clothing but have to find it themselves.
* Companies will set their own safety standards.
* VDU (computer screen) regulations will go, so will users' rights to eye tests and spectacles from employers.
* Controls on the dumping and use at work of toxic chemicals (which aren't properly enforced anyhow), will be reduced to next-to-nothing.
* Minimum and maximum workplace temperature controls to be scrapped.

EVERY YEAR 700 ARE KILLED, AND 200,000 INJURED AT WORK - THE VAST MAJORITY DUE TO BOSS'S NEGLIGENCE.

Even now, before the government has scrapped the health and safety laws, protection for us at work is disappearing.

* The government funded Health & Safety Executive telling local authorities to take a "softly, softly" approach enforcing regulations.
* New European health and safety laws are already being dodged, the UK has a "get-out clause" for small - medium sized business', where the highest proportion deaths and injuries occur.
* The government is refusing to introduce new EC safety regulations for workplaces, due in last year. And grants for the training of workplace safety reps disappear in 1995.
* In the construction industry, where the highest amount deaths and injury occur, countless firms have always ignored health and safety regulations. Unlike office work construction workers who suffer Repetitive Strain In have always been regarded as less important.

What are all these changes going to result in? Who benefit?

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Inside:

*WHAT'S A JOBPLAN?
*TRADE UNIONISM IN CRISIS - conference report
*HEALTH & SAFETY - attacks on workers rights
*STRIKING - nothing to fear.
*SOLIDARITY CENTRE UPDATE.

plus news, reviews, events and more...

the bulletin of Norwich Solidarity Centre

Questions & Answers on Anarchism

Q. What exactly is an Anarchist in your exclusive definition, and how does it differ from others who disagree with you but call themselves Anarchists? Is it personal likes and dislikes or is it political?

A. We would define an Anarchist as someone who considers Anarchism desirable (or who acts in what they consider an anarchist manner, in a capitalist society); but who also thinks anarchism is attainable, now; and who works towards that goal. There are a great many who come under the first section but one could hardly call them Anarchists in any meaingful sense, even if they write, publish and research in an academic way, or just drop out of politics and business activity. It has nothing to do with whether they are nice people or not. Some bourgeois liberals describing themselves as anarchists but who fall short in two sections of the above definition, think criticism of them must be 'personal' rather than political, even from people they have never met.

Q. Can one be a Christian Anarchist? Can one reconcile Anarchism with a non-Christian religion?

A. One can be a Christian and also an Anarchist, which is not to say a 'Christian Anarchist' is possible. An Anarchist can have ideas, either way, on any subject that doesn't affect authority or exploitation. There is no reason why people cannot believe in any God they choose, or none, and yet achieve a free society, providing worship of a God didn't entitle someone making laws in his name. But just as a Christian could be a scientist or vice versa (and many are), to be a Christian Scientist is neither one nor the other. It is the name chosen by a magical cult. The term 'Christian Anarchist' is a mask for Liberal Pacifism or, like 'philosophic Anarchist', a cop-out.

Buddhism has certainly no conflict with Anarchism though Eastern religions are nowadays used in the West as a cover for mysticism and escape from reality. Judaism, laying down strict laws of life in the present, including obedience to authority, is incompatible with Anarchism (there have been Jewish Anarchist movements in the sense of language, but invariably anti-religious). Islam has properly no Church or State and could be compatible with Anarchism but the mullahs have re-interpreted Islamic values in terms of a mediaeval discipline and a Muslim State that go beyond Fascism.

Norwich Solidarity Centre continued

they can help us with. This is an idea which could be used prior to a centre being set up in an area.

Of course we've had problems - getting people of their arses to visit the centre and get involved is one main one. Also how to involve those in industries with no industrial network, or our unemployed members is another. But with a little imagination these problems can be tackled.

A major problem when any group has a centre of its own is the tendency to simply sit around in it. A centre should generate activity, not be a substitute for it. People won't discover a centre by accident, or find it in Yellow Pages. We try to be aware of this and make sure we advertise ourselves through our bulletin, city centre bookstalls, participation in local events etc...

To summarise then, having a local centre, even if it's just a single room to start with, has many advantages. It immediately takes us a step away from being just another abstract political group, it shows we're actually doing something. It provides a base which is useful for practical reasons; mundane stuff like storing banners, books, stalls etc... it's also useful for social reasons - we now have a centre open at advertised times when someone can always be found at the centre. And of course it's there for political reasons - to play a part in revolution. We'd say give it a go in your area.

For further information or copies of our bulletin, please get in touch:

Norwich Solidarity Centre,
P.O. Box 73,
Norwich. NR3 1QD.

ANARCHIST BOOKFAIR

SATURDAY 22ND OCTOBER

RED LION SQUARE LONDON WC1

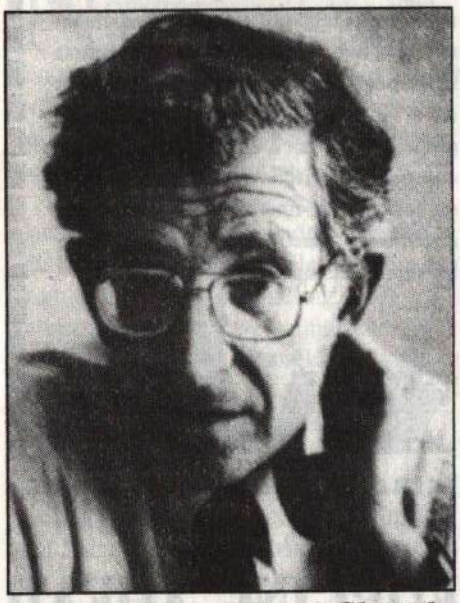
FORGING AHEAD

IT WAS touching one day to have had a number phone calls offering solidarity even if the first got one of the editors out of bed cursing.

They were the result of the news on TV of a police raid on *Black Flag Associates* allegedly taking away several million forged banknotes and making several arrests.

We weren't carrying on the tradition of Santos Cerrada, who undermined the Nazi occupation of France with what Miguel Garcia, who sabotaged the Franco regime in the same way, called the most humane act of resistance in a totalitarian country. *Black Flag Associates* doesn't print *Black Flag*, has nothing to do with the anarchist movement, and is a North London commercial printers whose choice of name has embarrassed us up to now by their printing the occasional SWP leaflet. Good to see the change of lifestyle but the poor bastards will in turn get embarrassed if they face a judge tipped in private (with no possibility of contradiction) that this is "an attempt to finance a new Angry Brigade" as happened once to some associates of this *Black Flag*.

THE ZAPATISTA



Noam Chomsky

THE NEW YEAR'S DAY uprising of Indian peasants in Chiapas coincided with the enactment of North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta), which the Zapatista army called a "death sentence" for Indians, a gift to the rich that will deepen the divide between narrowly concentrated wealth and mass misery, and destroy what remains of the indigenous society.

The Nafta connection is partly symbolic; the problems are far deeper. "We are the product of 500 years of struggle", the Declaration of War stated. The struggle today is "for work, land, housing, food, health care, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace". "The real background", the vicar-general of the Chiapas diocese added, "is complete marginalisation and poverty and the frustration of many years trying to improve the situation".

The Indian peasants are the most aggrieved victims of government policies. But their distress is widely shared. "Anyone who has the opportunity to be in contact with the millions of Mexicans who live in extreme poverty knows that we are living with a time bomb", Mexican columnist Pilar Valdes observed.

In the past decade of economic reform, the number of people living in extreme poverty in rural areas has increased by almost a third. Half the total population lacks resources to meet basic needs, a dramatic increase since 1980. Following IMF-World Bank prescriptions, agricultural production was shifted to export and animal feeds, benefitting agribusiness, foreign consumers, and affluent sectors in Mexico while malnutrition became a major health problem, agricultural employment declined, productive lands were abandoned and Mexico began to import massive amounts of food. Real wages in manufacturing fell sharply. Labour's share in gross domestic product, which had risen until the mid-70's, has since declined by well over a third. These are standard concomitants of neoliberal reforms. IMF studies show "a strong and consistent pattern of reduction of labour share of income" under the impact of its "stabilisation programmes" in Latin America, economist Manuel Pastor observes.

The Mexican Secretary of Commerce hailed the fall in wages as an inducement to foreign investors. So it is, along with repression of labour, lax enforcement of environmental restrictions, and the general orientation of social policy to the desires of the privileged minority. Such policies are naturally welcomed by the manufacturing and financial institutions that are extending their control over the global economy, with the assistance of mislabelled "free trade" agreements.

Nafta is expected to drive large numbers of farm workers off the land, contributing to rural misery and surplus labour. Manufacturing employment, which declined under the reforms, is expected to fall more sharply. A study by Mexico's leading business journal, *El Financiero*, predicted that Mexico would lose almost a quarter of its manufacturing industry and 14% of its jobs in the first two years. "Economists predict that several million Mexicans will probably lose their jobs in the first five years after the accord takes effect", Tim Golden reported in the *New York Times*. These processes should depress wages still further while increasing profits and polarisation, with predictable effects in the US and Canada.

A large part of the appeal of Nafta, as its advocates regularly stressed, is that it "locks in" the neoliberal reforms that have reversed years of progress in labour rights and economic development, bringing mass impoverishment and suffering along with enrichment for the few and for foreign investors. To Mexico's economy generally, this "economic virtue" has brought "little reward", the London *Financial Times* observes, reviewing "eight years of textbook market economic policies" that produced little growth, most of it attributable to unparalled financial assistance from the World Bank and the US. High interest rates have partially reversed the huge capital flight that was a major factor in Mexico's debt crisis, though debt service is a growing burden, its largest component now being the internal debt owed to the Mexican rich.

Not surprisingly, there was substantial opposition to the plan to "lock in" this model of development. Historian Seth Fein, writing from Mexico City, described large demonstrations against Nafta: "well articulated, if too-little-noticed in the United States, cries of frustration against government policies — involving repeal of constitutional labour, agrarian and education rights stipulated in the nation's popularly revered 1917 constitution — that appear to many Mexicans as the real meaning of

by Noam Chomsky

UPRISING

Los Angeles Times Juanita Darling reported the great anxiety of Mexican workers about the erosion of their "hard-won labour rights", likely to "be sacrificed as companies, trying to compete with foreign companies, looking for ways to cut costs".

A November 1st "Communication of Mexican Bishops on Nafta" condemned the agreement along with the economic policies of which it is a part because of their deleterious social consequences. They reiterated the concern of the 1992 conference of Latin American Bishops that "the market economy does not become something absolute to which everything is sacrificed, accentuating the inequality and the marginalisation of a large portion of the population" - the likely impact of Nafta and similar investor rights agreements. The agreement was also opposed by many workers (including the largest nongovernmental union) and other groups, which warned of the impact on wages, worker's rights, and the environment, the loss of sovereignty, the increased protection for corporate and investor rights, and the undermining of options for sustainable growth. Homero Aridjis, president of Mexico's leading environmental organisation, deplored "the third conquest that Mexico has suffered. The first was by arms, the second was spiritual, the third is economic."

It did not take long for such fears to be realised. Shortly after the Nafta vote in Congress, workers were fired from Honeywell and GE plants for attempting to organise independent unions, standard practice. The Ford Motor Company fired its entire work force in 1987, eliminating the union contract and rehiring workers at far lower salaries. Brutal repression suppressed protests. Volkswagen followed suit in 1992, firing its 14,000 workers and rehiring only those who renounced independent union leaders, with the backing of the always-ruling party.

These are the central components of the "economic miracle" that is said to be "locked in" by Nafta.

A few days after the Nafta vote, the US Senate passed "the finest anticrime package in history" (Sen. Orrin Hatch), calling for 100,000 new police, high-security regional prisons, boot camps for young offenders, extension of the death penalty and harsher sentencing, and other onerous conditions. Law enforcement experts interviewed by the press doubted that the legislation would have much effect on crime because it did not deal with the "causes of social disintegration that produce violent criminals". Primary

Continued Page 18

THE ZAPATISTA UPRISING - Continued from Page 17

among these are the social and economic policies polarising American society, carried another step forward by Nafta. The concepts of "efficiency" and "health of the economy" preferred by wealth and privilege offers nothing to the growing sectors of the population that are useless for profit-making, driven to poverty and despair. If they cannot be confined to urban slums, they will have to be controlled in some other way.

Like the timing of the Zapatista rebellion, the legislative coincidence was of more than mere symbolic significance.

The Nafta debate focused largely on job flows, about which little is known. But a more confident expectation is that wages will fall rather broadly. "Many economists think Nafta could drag down pay", Steven Pearlstein reported in the *Washington Post*, expecting that "lower Mexican wages could have a gravitational effect on the wages of Americans". That is expected even by Nafta advocates, who recognise that less skilled workers - about 70% of the work force - are likely to suffer wage loss.

A *New York Times* review of the expected effects of Nafta in the New York region reached similar conclusions. Gainers would be sectors "based in and around finance", "the region's banking, telecommunications and service firms": insurance companies, investment houses, corporate law firms, the PR industry, management consultants, and the like. Some manufacturers may gain, primarily in high tech industry, publishing, and pharmaceuticals, which will benefit from the increased protection for intellectual property, provisions designed to ensure that major corporations control the technology of the future. But there will also be losers, "predominantly women, blacks and Hispanics" and "semi-skilled production workers" generally; that is, most of the population of a city where 40% of children already live below the poverty line, suffering health and educational disabilities that "lock them in" to a bitter fate.

Noting that real wages have fallen to the level of the 1960s for production and nonsupervisory workers, the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment,
in an analysis of the executive version of Nafta, predicted that unless significantly modified it "could further lock the United States into a low-wage, low-productivity future", though revisions proposed by OTA, labour and other critics - which received little notice - could benefit the populations in all three countries.

The version of Nafta that was enacted is likely to accelerate a "welcome development of transcendent importance" (*Wall Street Journal*): the reduction of US labour costs to below any major industrial country apart from England; until 1985, hourly pay for American workers had been higher than the other G-7 countries. In a globalised economy, the impact is worldwide, as competitors must accomodate. GM can move to Mexico, or now to Poland, where it can find workers at a fraction of the cost of Western labour and be protected by a 305 tariff. VW can move to the Czech Republic to benefit from similar protection, taking the profits and leaving the government with the costs. Daimler-Benz can make similar arrangements in Alabama. Capital can move freely, workers and communities suffer the consequences. Meanwhile the huge growth of unregulated speculative capital imposes powerful pressures against stimulative government policies.

There are many factors driving global society towards a low wage, low growth, high profit future, with increasing polarisation and social disintegration. Another consequence is the fading of meaningful democratic processes as decision-making is vested in private institutions and the quasi-governmental structures that are coalescing around them, what the *Financial Times* calls a "de facto world government" that operates in secret and without accountability.

These developments have little to do with economic liberalism, a concept of diminishing significance in a world in which a vast component of "trade" consists of centrally-managed intrafirm transactions (half of US exports to Mexico, for example - "exports" that never enter the Mexican market). Meanwhile private power demands and receives protection from market forces, as in the past. It was quite appropriate for President Clinton, at the Seattle Asia-Pacific summit, to offer as his model for the "free market" future the Boeing Corporation, which would not be the country's leading exporter, nor probably even exist, were it not for the huge public subsidy it had always received. The protest of Indian peasants in Chiapas gives only a bare glimpse to time bombs waiting to explode, not only in Mexico.

Noam Chomsky January 10th 1994.

Requested by an editor of the *Washington Post* for January 16th, *Outlook*, but refused publication. Passed by the author to *Solidaridad Obrera* and *Black Flag*.

THE GOOD CAPITALIST SCHINDLER

THE REASON for the Holocaust Thomas Keneally's novel, *Schindler's Ark* is based on the true story of a German entrepreneur who rescued many hundreds of Jews from extermination during the War by employing them and certifying them as useful to the war effort. As *Schindler's List*, it has now been filmed as a Spielberg epic. Oskar Schindler is portrayed as a rare 'good German', which ignores the millions of German workers who slept through the Holocaust because they had been made powerless to do otherwise, the many who passively resisted in the manner of the 'Good Soldier Svejk' or the relative few who actively resisted. Schindler is seen as the Good Capitalist, one who resisted Hitler's policies.

'good German', one is entitled to criticise.

Schindler was a Sudeten German (born in Czechoslovakia), a typical wide boy who seized on the war to make a fortune, easily identifiable with any London spiv at the time. In Nazi Germany most small-time capitalists joined the Nazis, dodging the front but taking advantage of the war to loot and tyrannise the victims. Schindler joined the party, dodged the draft and profiteered, from the start realising the easy pickings would not last, and that the Holocaust was economically unproductive as well as inhumane.

The book and film show the not improbable realisation by Schindler that clemency to those in one's power might be more gratifying to a non-psychopathic

for all social problems, as expressed in the mystic meaning of the millenial Third Reich.

The nature of Hitler's anti-Semitism is clearly understood if is recognised that it was not just a campaign against a few scientists, lawyers and doctors etc. though these are most known as they received the greatest publicity. Anti-Semites thought Jews in Germany were over-represented in these categories.The first acts of Nazi legislation curbed professional people, dependent for registration upon the State. Jewish shopkeepers were forced out of business. Emigration was inevitably middle class. Those who could not afford (or were not helped) to emigrate, filled the concentration camps. It is clear most were not dentists and professors, who

CLEARING THE GHETTO: A SCENE FROM SCHINDLER'S LIST

Clearly if one were in the circumstances of the victims, it would be better to fall into the hands of Schindler than the slave-owner arms manufacturer Krupp. But if he is to be portrayed as the

employer than sadism, if it did not interfere with profit and pleasure. What they lack is an explanation of the Final Solution, which did not just mean liquidation of Jews but a final solution

were hardly suitable for rough physical slave labour. Nazi policy was directed against the working class, the Jews

Continued on Page 20

SCHINDLER CONTINUED

being the thin end of the wedge. The destruction of the Jewish middle class made easier the creation of a Jewish slave working class, seen as part of a series of restrictions.

The *Order of Employment October 1941* (after the professional and mercantile class had been eliminated) gives the terms of 'special conditions concerning employment of Jews in industry'. He or she cannot be in 'a German trade association', can only be paid for 'work actually done', can no longer receive child and family allowances, will receive no extra payment for Sunday or holiday work, and sickness benefits are cancelled. Unpaid free time can only be granted at the discretion of the employer who would have the right to refuse requests for time off. There are no longer negotiated holiday periods, notice can be given at any time from the next working day. Unemployment benefit is restricted to 'the minimum necessary to sustain life'. (*Anatomy of the SS State*).There were no limits to the exploitation of Jewish labour, including children, the alternative being, not unemployment, but the death camps.

After a couple of years there were few Jews left alive to work in factories, except for isolated factories like Schindler's, but the 1941 Order was not rescinded. On the contrary, it was made even harsher. There were now many 'subject' (i.e. conquered) nations to take their place.

What an ideal situation for an employer! Given a slave forced to scab under pain of immediate deportation and death, what value remained upon a German worker? As all men were called up for military service, and women withdrawn to the home, their places were filled by slaves whom the State had every intention of working to death. Had the German soldier been victorious, to what conditions of employment would he have returned? He would still be required to parade in uniform, a privileged slave soldier under rigid discipline, to keep down the slave population.

Having achieved a fascist employers' dream world, what came next? Polish, French, Russian, Spanish, Czechs, all forced into this mincing machine, where they took the place of the Jews as they were worked to death or sent to the gas chambers. The foreign workers, even those who volunteered, toiled under the same conditions of employment the Jews had done, except that they were permitted to breed. The Nazis assumed there would always exist a limitless field to draw on (after Europe, Africa), and the German worker would forever be made redundant. Then woe betide the soldier who wanted to go home and be an honest worker again!

The intention was for the victorious German to be forever under military command and strict discipline. "His" womenfolk would retire to the background to breed the new Masters of such of the conquered peoples as Nazi philosophy allowed to be the slave class. These 'underpeople' would be worked to death, but would have a cash value to capitalists until inevitably the bubble would burst. The Nazis did not accept the possibility of military defeat, or the possibility of economic collapse or social uprising.

Far from Nazism ever being revolutionary or new it is the oldest Statist system in the world, accommodated to capitalist requirements. Most capitalists do not welcome it, because of its inefficiency, but accept it as a last resort. Now they have no need of it. The triumph of Thatcherism means the working class can be wiped out as a force by constitutional, parliamentary means. Those working in modern Britain are expected to be grateful, and regard their bosses as mini-Schindlers!

Schindler's Ark, Thos Keneally (Sceptre Books 1982)
The Anatomy of the SS State, Helmut Krausnick and Martin Broszat (Paladin 1970; in German, *Anatomie der SS-Staates* 1965)
The Good Soldier Svejk (earlier translations, from German rather than Czech, given as *Schweik*) Jaroslav Hasek. Hilarious tale by a Czech Anarchist of a skiver in the Imperial Austrian Army (1914-18 war).

SECTARIAN NOTES

THE AWG - WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

SOME OF our readers may recall a letter some years back in *Black Flag* accusing us of being racist. The letter was from the then Anarchist Workers' Group and the reason we were "racist" was for attacking Islam at the time of Iran's fatwa against Salman Rushdie. How we came to such a typical anarchist position on organised religion isn't important here, but we've had complaints that our new format has lost some of its sectarian bile. So we're rectifying it now.

What has happened to the AWG since 1989? For those of you not in the know, the AWG was formed by ex-DAM members who rejected anarcho-syndicalism, instead looking to anarchist politcal organisation. They adopted much of the The Platform and entered the lefty as opposed to the anarchist ghetto. They even recruited a few from the Trots, as well as getting up the Anarchist Communist Federation's noses by targetting them as their closest potential allies.

A couple of years ago their magazine *Socialism From Below* folded, and they weren't at the last Bookfair. We thought they'd disappeared, but the truth is more interesting. One of their leaders has joined the almost cult-like Revolutionary Communist Party, the other the orthodox Trotskyist Workers Power. A small rump remains. We expect an angry letter listing our political errors any minute.

MW

OBITUARY

F.A.RIDLEY (1897-1994)

A FORGOTTEN socialist and atheist pioneer, Francis Ambrose (always Frank or 'FA') Ridley survived an expensive public school upbringing and a theological degree to become a soapbox orator in the days when that was the way to reach a mass audience. His book "The Jesuits" became a standard reference for well-funded scholars while he lived in poverty all his adult life. His was an undogmatic Marxism which began with the former SPGB and took him via a form of Trotskyism disowned by Trotsky himself to the Independent Labour Party. While honorary president of the ILP, and later of the National Secular Society, he was in the position of writing cheques and signing documents up to a million pounds in value, while he was perpetually on social insecurity. He was a friendly critic of Anarchists, always ready to help their defence campaigns (and scorning trots who sabotaged them). His collaboration with the anarchist bookseller and publisher, the late Charles Lahr, helped launch many a literary career for others, leaving them both as broke as ever.

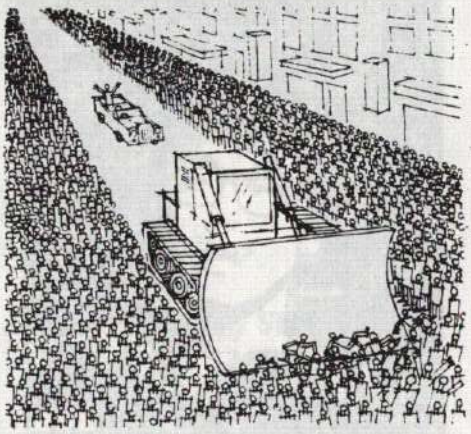
His wife, now dead many years, was (like the Speaker of the House of Commons) a

former Tiller Girl with no political interests, but the couple shared a passion for patronising amateur boxing with an incapacity for picking out future developers that could, I once teased him, apply to his political prophecies too. But he left a huge mass of published, out-of-print and unpublished writings which future generations may come to treasure.

REVIEW

FASCISM DOWN THE AGES - FROM CAESAR TO HITLER. F.A.RIDLEY (ROMER £4.95)

A NEW edition of one of Frank Ridley's later works came out just before his death. It is a historical analysis of Fascism as distinct from the demagogic tactics such as racism it sometimes employs to gain support. The adoption of the Roman law-and-order symbol was no accident. Ridley shows how the authoritarian policy of the Caesars was inherited by the Holy Roman Empire and then the Church to prevent social change. After the 1933 Concordat between the Vatican and Nazi Germany, the German bishops were required to swear loyalty to the regime as "the Nazis and the Papacy had the same objective: to arrest human progress."



ANARCHO-QUIZ

1. What would be the constitutional precedent to follow if a British Prime Minister went mad?
2. Which king complained, "I didn't think socialism meant making me a blasted zoo-keeper"?
3. What most amazed the world about Zapata's troops when they entered Mexico City?
4. A Prime Minister and virtual dictator of Ireland had a Spanish name and origin; a military dictator and PM of Spain had an Irish name and origin; and a liberal-minded dictator of Bavaria had a Spanish name but Irish origin. Who were the three?
5. Having left abdication to the very last moment, King Alfonso XIII was advised to get out of Madrid before the factory sirens went and the workers streamed out of the factories. What did he leave behind in his haste?
6. What significant revolutionary event was carried out by Middlesbrough workers in 1938?

Answers on Page 31

Campsfield continued

agitators". When a few demonstrators turned up the next day, they were held for a hour as potential threats to order.

On June 4th 600 people marched against Campsfield and the Immigration Detentions Act. A permanentcamp was set up outside the detention centre by protesters.

The next day Ali Tamarat, one of ten Algerians granted tempoary admission after hunger striking and then re-detained for addressing the March demo, was told that he was to be deported the next day. This coupled with the harassment of detainees lead to a heated argument and eventually a full scale riot. Eleven detainees managed to escape, 22were arrested and dispersed to other prisons and many prisoners were seriously injured by Group 4 staff.

The Home Office now has got a court order to evict the protesters camping outside Campsfield and plans to disperse the detainees to six national centres based at different prisons. It is vital that the resistance continues and that the detainees are not left isolated.

Contact: **Campaign to Close Campsfield, c/o 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4 1RQ**

FIGHTING RACISM IS NOT A CRIME

ON OCTOBER 22ND 1993, the Progressive Student Organisation held an anti-rascist rally to counter an announced demonstration by neo-nazis in front of the Coffman Memorial Union on the University of Minnesota campus. About 100 anti-racists rallied for nearly an hour before two neo-nazi skinheads, decked out in "white-power" gear, showed up. They appeared to be scouting for their neo-nazi pals.

The two scuffled with the demonstration security team. Several people were hurt. Daniel Simmer, one of the racists, charged at the anti-racists with brass knuckles. He picked a fight with **Kieran Frazier Knutson** who thought he was about to be stabbed and defensively hit back with his flashlight. The cops brought the skinhead down with a flying tackle.

Months later, the State brought felony charges against Kieran. He goes to trial on June 20th 1994. Kieran faces two counts of felony assault, based almost entirely on statements from Simmer and his fiancee Amy Foreman, the other white-power skinhead at the demo. The charges carry a minimum prison sentence of 36 months and a maximum of 10 years in prison and a $20,000 fine. The nazi has not been charged - not even for possession of an offensive weapon.

Local papers believed the neo-nazi version of events. They slammed the anti-racist demonstrators for being "violent".

Kieran, 22, works part time and has been strongly involved in local and national anti-racist and anti-fascist movements. He is also a member of the Love And Rage Federation. It's ludicrous that these charges have been brought.

Please write to or call the County Attorney and the head of Adult Prosecution and express your outrage at the charges brought against Kieran.

DEMAND ALL CHARGES AGAINST KIERAN BE DROPPED!

County Attorney Mike Freeman
C2000 Hennepin County Govt. Centre
300 S.6th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55415
USA
Tel: (612)-348-5550

Pete Connors Adult Prosecution
C2100 Hennepin County Govt. Centre
300 S.6th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55415
USA
Tel: (612)-348-5505

The above information was received from the **Anti-Fascist Defense Committee, c/o Minneapolis ABC, PO Box 7075, Minneapolis, MN 55407, USA.**

KATSUHISA OMORI

SOME OF our regular readers may remember *Black Flag* highlighting the case of KATSUHISA OMORI a few years ago. Omori is an anti-imperialist Japanese prisoner who was arrested in 1976 and has been in detention for 18 years. He was arrested after a bomb attack in which two people died, and although he has always maintained his innocence and was framed up, he was sentenced to the Death Penalty. He appealed against the verdict and lost the appeal in 1988. However, in 1992 his original defence counsel resigned in protest and a second defence counsel was formed.

Omori's supporters have always claimed that his trial is political due to his refusal to condone the Japanese State for it's invasion of the Ainu indigenous people's homeland. In 1984, when the appeal trial started, many actions and demonstrations against the Japanese Government took place in several cities around the world. This included explosive attacks on Japanese companies, direct action and pickets of Japanese embassies.

On 6th June 1994, oral proceedings on the adjucation of the Hokkaido Prefectural bombing case started at the Supreme Court in Tokyo. There was a protest action outside the Court on the 6th May protesting Omori's innocence and demanding his immediate release. Please send messages of support to:
PO Box 57, Sakyo, Kyoto 606, Japan
E-Mail: arpresist@igc.apc.org

Omori

Moldavian Anarchists Released

THE FOLLOWING is part of a letter from the FAU (the German section of the International Workers Association).

Dear Friends,
It is with great pleasure for us to let you know that Tamara Burdenko, Igor Gergenreder and their daughter have got permission for leaving the country after the international campaign for them.

We want to thank you all for your support! We think the 'case' of Igor and Tamara shows that solidarity has a bigger influence than we often expect. Quoting the Department of the Interior of Moldavia towards Igor when they gave him the permission, "You must have a lot of international friends...!".

It should encourage us to continue our work and particularly our international support campaigns with full strength!

Again thanks a lot

GERMAN ANTI-FASCISTS JAILED

Since November 1993 five Turkish and Kurdish anti-fascists have been imprisoned on remand in Germany, charged with murder, aiding and abetting murder, attempted murder and assault. Fatma, Mehmet, Erkan, Abidin and Bahrettin were arrested in a series of raids in Berlin and accused of the murder of Gerhard Kaindl. He was a high ranking member of 'Deutsche Liga Für Volk und Heimat' a right wing party trying to unite other fascist groups. Kaindl was stabbed to death during an attack in a Chinese restaurant in April 1992.

Despite police claims to have abandoned the case after trying to target the militant Turkish/Kurdish 'Anti-Fascist Youth Group' the five were arrested on the word of an alleged informant who was involved in the action.

Anti-FA in Berlin are asking for solidarity with the arrested prisoners. Fatima is locked up 23 hours a day and is forced to exercise alone, having no contact with other prisoners. Erkan has been transfered to the notorious psychiatric/ neurological unit at Tegal Prison - a place with a reputation for drugging inmates into silence. Letters can be sent to them via:

Staatsanwaltschaft (Public prosecutor) Berlin, z.Hd.Sta. Neilsen, Az: 1 Kap Js 679/ 92, Turmstr.91, 10548 Berlin, Germany. Inside this envelope place the envelopes addressed:

Abidin Eraslan, BuchNr: 5455/93, UHA Moabit, Alt Moabit 12a, 10559 Berlin

Mehmet Ramme, BuchNr:5436/93, UHA Moabit, Alt Moabit 12a, 10559 Berlin

Fatma Balamir, BuchNr 950/93/8, JVA für Frauen, Friedrich-Olbricht-Damm 17, 13627 Berlin

Source: Taking Liberties

Italian Revolutionary Needs Support

N DECEMBER 1992, Salvatore Cirincione was arrested in Milan, Italy after having been on the run for 8 years. He was imprisoned in the 1980's for being a member of the marxist group 'Azione Rivoluzionaria', but managed to escape. Following regular beatings and torture from prison staff he now suffers from hæmorrhaging and infections. In July 1993 the prison authorities decided that Salvatore must stay in prison despite his health problems, saying that, "as an active anarchist he is a danger to society". The Minister of Justice has now decided not to supply the medicine he needs to survive. Salvatore's state of health is now very bad and he desperately needs money to stay alive. Donations can be sent to 121 Bookshop, address below. Letters of support can be sent to Salvatores Cirincione, Carcere di san Vittore, Nilano, Italy.

For further information contact: Massimo Leonardi Applequince, Via d. Corui, 41- 01100 Viterbo, Italy.

Source: Taking Liberties

Taking Liberties

Published by the Anarchist Black Cross

Issue Number 12 out now!

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c/o 121 Bookshop, 121 Railton Rd, London SE24
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Supporting Class Struggle Prisoners

ACTIVIST RECAPTURED

JOHN BOWDEN has been a long time activist inside the prison system whilst serving a life sentence for murder and has written for both *Taking Liberties* and the communist paper *Fight Racism, Fight Imperialism.* As a prison activist he became a target for extra attention from the prison authorities - regular moves fom jail to jail, brutality, beatings etc. Realising he would never be released unless broken he decided to escape as an act of rebellion. He stayed free for 18 months but has now been recaptured and needs support more than ever. Letters and cards of solidarity can be sent to:

John Bowden 1273/94, HMP Perth, 3 Edinburgh Rd, Perth Scotland

RIGHT TO REPLY - IRELAND

SAD TO SAY this, but the article on Ireland - *The Dead Command* - was riddled with innaccuracies, generalisations and a few ironies for good measure. Did no one bother to check up on a few facts? The general sentiment was fine and valid - a plea for working class unity - but if only things were that simple.

If one section of the working class, and the areas they live in, is under occupation by massive state forces and having to put up with various repressive measures on a daily basis, while another section of the working class, unfortunately, supports, encourages and even participates in that repression, class unity is all but a dream.

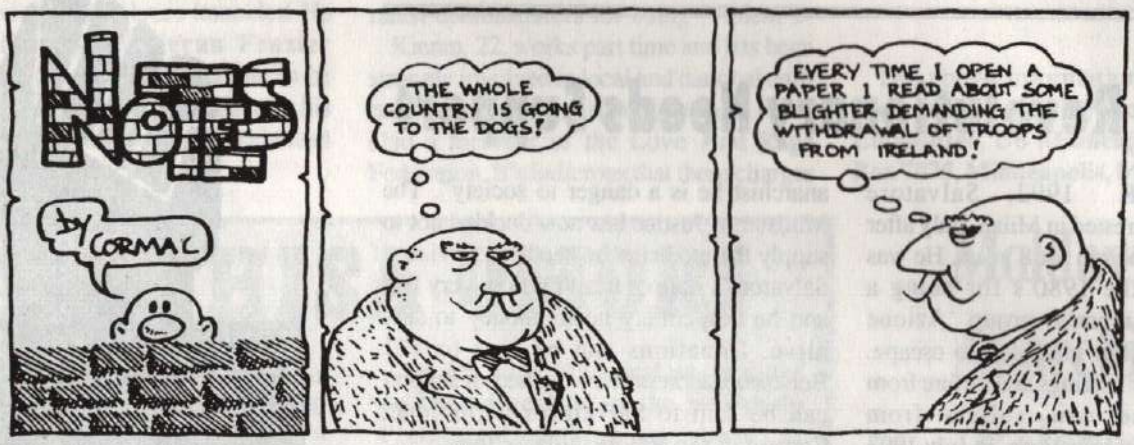
I'll answer some of the points made in the article though the situation is moving on, in the interests of accuracy and debate. I believe there will be an announcement in the near future on British withdrawal from Ireland. (The Downing Street Declaration states that Britain no longer has any strategic interest in Northern Ireland). Whether it is full political unity is another matter in the short term, but it will be de facto.

Yes, it will be a capitalist Ireland with huge multi-national investment etc. I can hear *Black Flag* saying "I told you so" already! But what do you expect if there is no anarchist or socialist workers' movement?

to Northern Ireland or Britain, jailed them for gun-running etc., without risk to their political future.

"The police profess not to know the identity of this private army." So how is it that politicians are forever saying that the 'security' forces do know who they are and at the least they should be interned? A British soldier who served in Belfast: "....You knew the local PIRA leader of the ASU in your area. You knew his bomb maker, his snipers. Trouble is, you couldn't prove anything...everybody knows." (2)

As for the Provisionals being "created by the Irish Republic, the Americans and possibly with British connivance..."



In issue #204 of *Black Flag*, commenting on the war in Bosnia, it is said "what can be done from the outside to end the war? The brutal answer is 'nothing'." Could the same not be said about Northern Ireland? British intervention has been a failure and it is time for it to end and the people of Ireland to sort out their own problems. *Black Flag* won't say that though because of its paranoia of being seen as pro-Republican. Therefore it doesn't take 'sides' and tries to pass itself off as arguing from a militant anarchist position. But to those of us who have a bit of knowledge of the situation (excuse the arrogance) it comes across as misinformed liberalism.

What's perhaps most disappointing is the underlying sentiment that if it wasn't for the IRA bombing and shooting, then a 'solution' might be found and working class unity possible. That's turning the argument on it's head. The Provisionals are a product of the 'troubles', not the cause of them.

"A military solution to Northern Ireland.....would be simple for the British who dare not achieve it..." Oh yeah? But doesn't repression breed resistance? The British army recognised this years ago. "Document 37" leaked to the press in 1978, was drafted by a senior defence intelligence officer, Brigadier Glover. It concluded: "The Provisionals' campaign of violence is likely to continue while the British remain in Ireland." In other words, they didn't think they could defeat them and I doubt that has changed much.

"...What [American] president would risk it electorally?" "The British Government's view on the importance of America to the IRA was exaggerated. There was never any likelihood of the organisation attracting any significant support there, and what success it did have depended on showing a false face to Irish-Americans." (1) And in any case, numerous American presidents have allowed volunteers to be extradited back

where's the evidence to support this? The Provisionals arose through a split in the IRA as the 'troubles' unfolded before them: "The theory of a government-inspired conspiracy to remove the dangerous leftists of the new IRA and replace them with the manageable stooges of the old tradition was characteristically fanciful and vain. There was scarcely any evidence in 1969 that the Goulding camp's political strategy was making significant progress in the South, nor that it had any potential to do so." (3)

The Irish government made many posturing gestures and statements, sent officials, held meetings etc. But this was due to pressure from people demanding that they 'do something'. In the event they did very little and 'creating' the Provisionals wasn't one of them.

The split in the IRA was brought about by a difference of views on how to deal with the situation facing them. All IRA

companies were canvassed by both positions and it was voted on with some 80% voting for armed resistance, their immediate concern being defence. A forgiveable thing, surely?

It could be said that if the 'officials' were prepared to support armed defence at the outset then the whole situation could have been different, given their more class-based politics at the time, but that's the stuff of political debating clubs.

A political solution to Northern Ireland isn't impossible. In fact it is looking more and more likely despite the killings continuing.

By saying that a political solution is impossible, don't you really mean one that is acceptable to *Black Flag*? For, if truth be told, isn't that what the general attitude is? 'They're not anarchists, therefore they're wrong, fuck the lot of them.' A number of anarchists take the same position. They seem to expect people to become anarchists - just like that! If people have no, or little, or access to our ideas how are they going to become libertarians? If anarchists in Northern Ireland stand on the sidelines then that's where they'll

remain - irrelevent. No doubt there are good exceptions to this (come back *Ainrial* - Belfast anarchist newspaper) and obviously the present situation isn't great for anarchist or socialist politics. But it won't change by pretending it doesn't exist.

The 'simplistic' view in fact comes from *Black Flag*. I know few who believe that the withdrawal of troops would be followed by immediate peace and reconciliation. It won't. It will take at least a generation. Is *Black Flag* incapable of acknowledging that perhaps a sectarian state run and armed by bigots is the source of the problem and that to dismantle it may help relieve the situation?

Of course the Loyalists won't like it but all bad things come to an end! They would have valid complaints if their standard of living went down dramatically or they were being purged or repressed. But where's the evidence for that? They would be at least a quarter of the whole population - they would have much more political and industrial muscle than they have at present within the framework of the 'United Kingdom', where they make up 1/50th of the population.

Given that,isn't there more revolutionary working class potential than what is at present?

Saying the Republic is "almost the most reactionary government in Europe" is trivial. What you really mean is that the Catholic Church is powerful. So what's new? No, you can't get abortions in the 'south' - try getting one in the 'north'. Paisley and his Orange bigots are as hostile to abortion and as reactionary as any Catholic priest.

And why re-hash arguments that come from various media sources and politicians? "The leaders of the Republic don't want...to pick up the Social Security bill for Ulster" - and here's me thinking it was the 'south' that was a poverty-ridden banana republic run by priests and peasants! Well, what does the leader of the Republic think? Albert Reynolds recently said: "A united Ireland should be more viable and dynamic than two smaller ecenomies." Do you really think that the Republican movement ..."takes no account of what has happened since 1921"?

The paragraph concerning 'protestant' decendency going back 3-400 years, and them being "not real Irish" was aimed at whom? There are undoubtedly a minority of catholic bigots who would say such things, but for decades Republicans have

Continued following page

Boxing Under Threat

THE DEATH of talented young bantam weight boxer Bradley Stone following brain damage was followed by an extensive medical enquiry. It may be that weight reduction to come down to the prescribed size, causing excessive dehydration leaving the brain unprotected, was the cause. This is a hazard of professional boxing. It is not due to the sport itself but to the necessity of the commercial market. The young boxer turned pro has to determine in which class he stands the chance of the greater or quicker financial rewards. There is no free lunch.

Even so, British professional boxing has a remarkably clean record in terms of health and safety as compared with other sports, while amateur boxing has an impeccable one. If you think of horse or car racing, mountain climbing, cave exploring,swimming, boating, all have an element of risk, which attracts the enthusiast, and has become an outlet for urban civilisation. Where it does not bring danger or suffering to others, like the hunting habits of the rich, what harm? What is now called 'health fascism' is a by-product of do-gooding liberalism, singles out boxing (for love or money) for banning appeals after one death by misadventure. Even with a tragedy like Hillsborough, nobody calls for a ban on attending football matches - though the Continentals went close to it after Brussels (but for somebody else!). They dare not propose banning football for their own countries because it would be a vote loser. The electoral impact of proposing a ban on boxing can be camouflaged with allegations they are concerned with the 'poor wretches' who take part in it.

The day Bradley died, I noticed (from bare mentions in the press) a man died as the result of harmless jogging in the London Marathon, two died in the Grand Prix, three were drowned while sailing, two while punting, and that obviously was not all. The anti-boxing lobby is inspired by other motives than health dangers. The late Edith Summerskill was vociferous against the Noble Art. She began as an absolute pacifist and entered Parliament on a Peace First platform. She believed youthful training in pugilism led to aggression and thus to war. Her pacifism led her into the wartime Government, disapproving of Army boxing but taking Air Force bombing of Dresden and Hiroshima in her stride.

Aggression in individuals, outside Government, doesn't lead to war. It is caused by meek individuals in governmental positions. It is well established that professional boxers in wartime Army are never more than PT corporals. Perhaps the real objection is that it induces people to stand up to aggression.

Consider how many lives are saved by amateur boxing, which flourishes because of professional boxing. The extension of boxing to the martial arts which are equally suitable for women gives an extra dimension to the value of the sport. Professional sport is always in need of a clean-up. The professional do-gooders must lay their hands off the people's sporting outlets. The people are seldom wrong, the politicians always are. Providing any sport is voluntary to watch and to take part in, and any risks are known, what more can one ask but that its commercial exploitation is always subject to scrutiny?

AM

REPLY ON IRELAND CONTD.

been saying that the protestants/ loyalists are Irish and should live together in peace. Just like the article suggests.

There was relative peace in Northern Ireland, before the mid sixties, because the 'minority' knew their place, as second-class citizens. That is not peace, that is repression. Nor did this 'peace' lead to an increase in working-class militancy or indeed to a reformist, class-based organisation. There have been a few inspiring cases of working class unity in Northern Ireland, but let's not exaggerate them. And when the bosses and politicians played the 'Orange card', the loyalists did their duty.

In more recent times, working-class militancy from Loyalists has been directed against any perceived reform, as when they brought down the power-sharing Stormont regime. Nowadays, it is more likely to be expressed though a gun. True, James Connolly saw the need for a workers' movement not divided on religious lines (who divided it?). He also said that partition of Ireland would cause a carnival of reaction in the North and he wasn't saying that out of dewy-eyed nationalism.

The problem with *Black Flag's* analysis of the situation in Northern Ireland is the lack of it. Have we nothing in common or nothing to learn. "It [the IRA] is a working class organisation and its members lead working class lives. Home for most of the Belfast volunteers is a council estate or a terraced house." (4) Doesn't that sound familiar? It is the same for UDA/UVF volunteers too. The similarity generally ends there.

Only middle class lefties romanticise the 'struggle'. West Belfast or the Bogside are not revolutionary paradises. They are full of contradictions just like London, Glasgow, or Manchester. These are ordinary working class people living in an extraordinary situation which was forced upon them. We can criticise the politics and much of the tactics of the Republican movement, but what is the alternative to resistance?

P.

Notes.
(1) *The Provisional IRA* - Patrick Bishop and Eamonn Mallie.
(2) *The Crack - A Belfast Year*. Sally Belfrage.
(3) *The Provisional IRA* - Patrick Bishop and Eamonn Mallie.
(4) *The Provisional IRA* - Patrick Bishop and Eamonn Mallie.

REVIEWS

ANARCHISM AND ECOLOGY: The historical relationship
THE ANARCHIST CASE AGAINST AN AUSTRALIAN GREEN PARTY

Both by Graham Purchase. Available for £1 each (plus P+P) from Black Flag.

GRAHAM PURCHASE must be the most prolific anarchist writer in Australia. *Anarchism and Ecology* explores the similarities between anarchist and ecological thought, from early pioneers like Charles Fourier, through better-known 19th century anarchists Reclus and Kropotkin to today. The practice of anarchists in Spain is examined from an ecological perspective. The final part is a call for a "Global Eco-Regional Federation", concluding that "anarchism, unlike capitalism and Marxism, has always fostered an intense interest in the proper ecological management of the Earth."

As might be imagined, the case against the Australian Green Party applies to Green Parties everywhere. An analogy is made with Labour Parties and their historic sell-outs, as well as a call for ecologists to unite with organised workers to fight the cause of environmental destruction - capitalism and the State.

MH

PIT SENSE VERSUS THE STATE- A HISTORY OF MILITANT MINERS IN THE DONCASTER AREA.

Dave Douglass.
£4.50 Phoenix Press
ISBN 0 948984 26 0

AN INTERESTING account of the tactics of the militant Doncaster miners during and since the 1984-'85 strike, with stuff on the fights within the union, the left and anarchists, as well as management and the government.

Douglass was a delegate at Hatfield, not a full time bureaucrat as some have alleged. Though some of his book is a bit intermittent, it's a fascinating read for anyone concerned with rebuilding that militant spirit in both communities and workplaces. Recommended.

Mike Ward.

BOOKCHIN - SOCIETY AND NATURE

NOT CONTENT with writing a library-ful of books, Murray Bookchin has set out to create a new movement, which he calls Libertarian Municipalism, backed by the intellectual weight of a new journal, *Society and Nature* (the International Journal of Political Ecology), which is a fair old read, running to 200 pages, published 3 times a year.

Bookchin, to the uninitiated, is someone who over the years has written some very thought-provoking and radical material. At the same time he has also frustrated and annoyed anarchists the world over, by seeming so full of his own cleverness that he writes in a manner sometimes only decipherable with the aid of a thesaurus and a dictionary.

Having not read any of his stuff for some time, I was pleased to see this new project in the form of nine different contributions by various writers, making it a whole lot more readable. The purpose of the journal is to provide a forum for people to discuss and develop ideas around the current organisation of society, how to re-organise it ecologically, and to give space for the "presentation of new currents of thought and action". Each edition of the journal has a theme, the one I picked up being *The State and an Ecological Society.* This common thread basically looked at how best to organise now and in the future to struggle effectively, win reforms, and ultimately organise our social relations in an ecological and truly democratic fashion.

In the first artcle, Takis Fotopoulos argues that the basis of a free, ecologically organised society has to be a kind of "economic democracy" - ie.that no true libertarian set-up can exist without individuals feeling that they have a large degree of control and influence

CONTINUED FOLLOWING PAG

BOOKCHIN REVIEW CONTINUED

over the economy that they operate within. He goes on to suggest that this degree of control is only possible if the economy is decentralised to the extent where it can be regulated by assemblies, in particular at the community or municipal level. For this to be feasible, communities need to become self-reliant, to collectively own the productive resources, and for sources to be allocated on a confederal basis. The interesting thing here is not the stated aims but the methods suggested as a means of transition. What is put forward is not exactly reform or revolution, but a bizarre hybrid of the two, a sort of creeping radicalisation of the municipality, the setting up of libertarian projects and decision-making processes which become strong enough to challenge existing structures.

At this point I began to think that this was a very sixties way of thinking and seemed to suggest the local and national state should disappear up its own arsehole. Then it occurred to me, this man may mean that we should all become councillors and change the world that way - surely not!

Next up was Murray Bookchin who went on to further develop these ideas, in particular the idea of confederalism. The main thrust of the argument was that to give participatory democracy a chance to work, there had to be a combination of self-sufficieny, interdependence, decentralisation and localism. The approach advocated by Bookchin was to realise that a pre-condition for the physical decentralisation of cities is to first decentralise them institutionally. Bookchin then does something which quite takes me by surprise - he says that there may be times when running for office in the city council may be a positive step to take. His justification for this appears to be that by promoting decentralising ideas at this level, a situation of dual power can be attained, and by federating with others this may overcome the attraction of the orthodox centralised municipality. To be honest, by now I was thinking "he's finally flipped, he might as well join the British Greens". But there's a serious point to this, namely that if we are given opportunities to resist and decrease central control, should we take them or not? Especially if, as Bookchin suggests, we can do it by calling assemblies and practicing our principles of mandate-based participatory democracy as the ground rules of our involvement.

The next article dealt with how community control links in or conflicts with workers' control. The proposal made is that the two need not compete, but that we need to find the proper relationship to ensure that the aim of a society run by its members is acheived in reality and not just in theory. Although the analysis is too lengthy to repeat here, suffice it to say that the conclusion reached is: that the most democratic structure would be; workers control of everday operations of workplaces with workers rotating among workplaces; community control, through assemblies, of the basic economic decisions concerning the structure of consumption, the allocation of productive responsibilities, the choice of technology, the scale of production and distribution.

The vital thing to make clear here is that as syndicalists we have to admit our mistakes as well as our successes. When Rudolf Rocker wrote *Anarcho-Syndicalism* he believed that the labour movement would become a self-developing struggle, building upon itself in a series of escalating demands, winning more power as time goes on, until a mature experienced mass of activists are able to take on the state and put the organisation of society back into the hands of its members. This has proved wholly incorrect, with most of the labour movement having to behave in a consistently defensive mode.

The conclusion that is drawn is that to combat the isolation which results from this constant slog, workplace groups should be part of broader community organisations that give support and context to workplace struggles. This, it must be realised, is with the understanding that struggles in the here and now have to be seen as being a way of decentralising and challenging state power by setting up democratic institutions, and that as a movement we should be seeking to place workplace struggles in their proper place - alongside the other local issues that a locality needs to address as a whole.

The other articles had a depressing tendency to become rather academic-sounding, but nevertheless are food for thought and a coherent and persuasive collection of ideas, which when first read appear quite odd and out of step with a lot of anarchist ideas. The main thing I got out of this was the realisation that as syndicalists we carry a lot of baggage; until we throw some of it away, and begin to ask ourselves some difficult questions, we will remain a small influence of little significance.

PD

(*Society and Nature* can be ordered from **AK Press**, price £6.50).

AK PRESS

AK PRESS are handling the bulk distribution of *Black Flag*. They publish their own titles too, fifteen in the last twelve months and they reckon to do the same in the next twelve months, including works by Noam Chomsky, Murray Bookchin, Jello Biafra and many others. They are also issuing a collection of essays by Nestor Makhno, and previously unpublished writings by Victor Serge, plus two volumes of the collection of writings by Guy Aldred, Skira's biography of Makhno (first time in English), and Daniel Guerin's four volume anthology of anarchist writings *Neither God nor Master*. A reprint of *Floodgates of Anarchy* (now into four editions) and an updated version of *Anarchism: Arguments for and against* will come along in due course. Some of the books, such as *Re-inventing Anarchy* , are dodgy but otherwise this is a publishing venture well worth supporting.

AK are also working to set up a new pamphlet series, both reprints of older material and new stuff. Incidentally, the Kate Sharpley Library pamphlets are available from them, as are all books and pamphlets reviewed in *Black Flag*.

The address is:
AK Press, 22 Lutton Place, Edinburgh EH8 9PE. Drop them a line to receive their catalogue and details of *Friends of AK Press*.

BALANCE SHEET 1st FEB - 15th MAY 1994.

SALES & SUBS	£570.40
*DONATIONS	£284.60
TOTAL	£855.00
PRINTING(on a/c)	£548.00
POSTAGE	£327.00
TOTAL	£875.00

The bulk of the prinitng bills still need to be paid - any offers of help?

*DONATIONS: BC (Dagenham) £4; SP (Norwich) £6; AC (Oxford) £20; MH (London) £52, MW £55, AM £60, JN £20, DR £10, Slipper £24; PF (US) £33.60. Thanks to all those who send us donations.

BARGAIN BASEMENT

Zapata of Mexico by Peter Newell (Cienfuegos Press 1979 - published in 1979 on the centenary of Zapata's birth.) Now out of print, we have the last two or three copies, £10 each (post free UK).

Also for a bargain £3 (post free in the UK) we can send the famous *Art of Anarchy* by Flavio Constantini. Our address is on Page 2.

Football Competition

Our Day Will Come fanzine are organising a 5-a-side football tournament in October as part of the Anarchist festival. It will cost £25 per team, and there will be a trophy. ODWC tell us that it will be a fun event, and, as if it really needs saying, mixed and women only teams are welcome.

Write to Our Day Will Come, PO Box 467, LONDON E8 3QX for more details.

CONFLICT

THE CONCLUDING event to Anarchy in the UK is a concert by Conflict. The all ticket event is at the Astoria, Charing Cross Rd, London W1 on Saturday 29th October. For more information contact Mortarhate,
PO Box 448,
Eltham,
London SE9
071 237 1182

In the next issue of *Black Flag*, we will be doing a review of the local Anarchist press in Britain. Could comrades please send in samples/copies of any papers or newsletters they are writing or producing. We look forward to receiving them. Ta!

VOICES OF THE FREE

A HISTORY of anarcho-punk in the UK is being planned - hopefully to be published this year - and the editor(s) are asking for contributions from all you punk rockers out there! They are asking for info, photos, tapes if you were in a band, experiences and histories. They also want to hear from you if you are/were a distributor, fanzine writer, promoter etc. They want as many contributions as possible in order to give as broad a view as they can.

Please send stuff, or for more info contact:

Black Sheep Design
c/o PO Box 2795,
London
NW10 9AY

THE BLAST

The first issue of a new "agitational paper" *The Blast*, has just hit the streets. It is produced in Minneapolis and is available in this country from Active Distribution. It is available wholesale from Active at 66p each including postage and packing, minimum 10 copies. Or you may prefer an individual subscription, 6 copies are £5 inclusive, £7 for Europe. All cheques should be made out to "Active Distribution" and must be in UK sterling (with a UK bank address on non-UK cheques).

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Deptford DAM / Red & Black Club
Deptford DAM are no longer using their old PO Box. They can be contacted via
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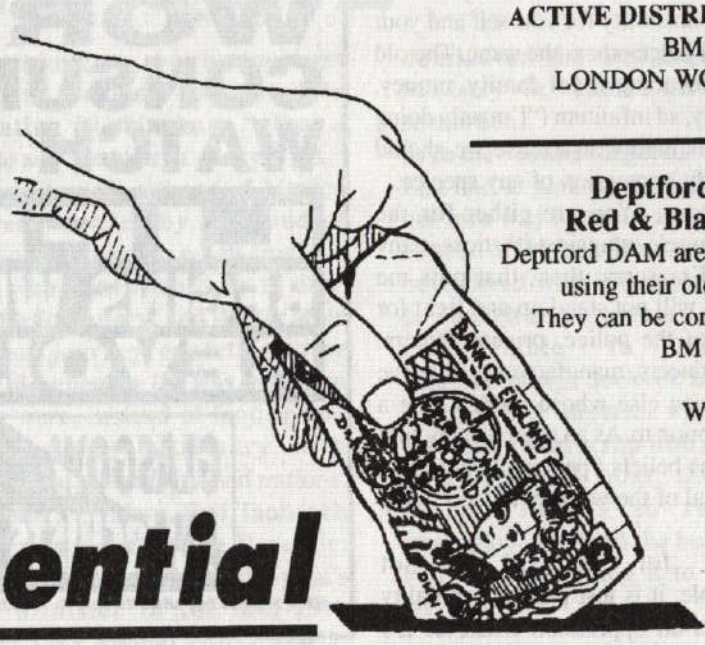
London
WC1N 3XX

Donations aren't just helpful



They're Essential

LETTERS

WHO ARE THE WORKERS?

THE ARTICLE *What is Terrorism* printed in the Spring issue of *Black Flag* fell into the old 'who are the enemies?' trap seemingly set by Anarchists for Anarchists. By this, I am talking about the section criticising the militant animal rights campaigns, or, to give them a name, Animal Liberation Front (ALF) actions.

The Author, AM, writes that to target workers in their capacity as butchers, circus hands, furriers etc., is wrong because, as workers, they do all the shit jobs, and goes on to say that no amount of concern for the animals will succeed while profits determine all. In this he misses the main aim of the ALF, which is to cause economic sabotage, hitting the profits of the animal abuse industry, a tactic which has proved itself time and time again. The liberation of animals is only part of the actions taken which normally include damage to the property of abusers. But to return to the main criticism of attacking workers in the industries which abuse animals, or, in most instances, their property. This is the same argument which labels the police and the army as just workers in uniforms! Somewhere you have to draw the line of who is the enemy, and by the nature of the problem this is difficult. Surely by declaring yourself an Anarchist you have to take responsibility for yourself and your actions and judge others the same. The old argument of doing it for family, money, god, country, ad infinitum ("I'm only doing my job!") is hardly an excuse we should use to justify oppression of any species.

This phrase, 'You are either for the workers struggle or against it' sticks in my gut. Well I'm sorry, then, that puts me against it. I will not stand up and fight for the rights of the police, prison officers, nuclear engineers, manufacturers of nerve gas or anyone else whose work I take a moral exception to. As an anarchist my first duty is to the beliefs I personally hold, not to some ideal of the workers always being right.

Concern for animals is not commendable, it is just part of a morality which fights all oppression whatever it's source. Forget the artificial boundaries and labels and look at the source of the problems. Almost anyone can claim to be a worker!

SR

COMMENT: *The question of 'Who are the Workers?' is an economic not a moral one. It includes all who do not exploit or oppress society, so the police and screws are clearly not workers, in uniform or otherwise. It's all very well taking a moral exception to things, but the real issue is how you change society.*

For years environmentalists in the Pacific North West of the United States thought that the timber workers were the enemy. Only recently have both workers and Greens realised, perhaps too late, who the real enemy is. Capitalism survives because those who work for it acquiesce, so of course workers aren't always in the right.

But you don't get workers fighting their bosses and ultimately the whole system, by attacking both exploiter and exploited as one and the same.

WORK
CONSUME
WATCH TV
LIFE
BEGINS WITH
REVOLT
GLASGOW
ANARCHISTS
FOR A SOCIALISM THAT *LIBERATES* WRITE TO: P.O. BOX 1008, G42 8AA

IT WAS very good news to find you publishing again. The Fall issue of *Anarchist Studies* offers a vacuous and glowing review of Peter Marshall's: *Demanding the Impossible. A History of Anarchism*, by Andrew Dobson of Keele University - academics are such shameless backscratchers. But at the end of the review Dobson shows his true colours by writing "...a fully balanced account would have given more time to anarcho-capitalists and their forebears" - this was in a book that includes Rousseau, Thatcher etc! Excuse me? My understanding is that anarchism in both theory and practice is devoted to political and economic equality, i.e. it as as much anti-capitalist as anti-statist.

Steve Harnsberger

INADVERTENTLY, I'm sure, you point to the central weakness of anarchism in your article on the Zapatistas. You say that Villa and Zapata had control of Mexico City and therefore of State power. Villa didn't know how to run a government and Zapata didn't want to, so Carranza stepped in. If only they'd seized power, if only there'd been a Trotsky to organise their fighters into a Red Army, Mexico's history would certainly have been different.

John S.
Birmingham

Reply: It wasn't an 'inadvertent' confession but historically the case. Villa wasn't an anarchist, Zapata acted instinctively. We are not bound to follow Zapata's or anyone else's course elsewhere. Admittedly things would have been different if there'd been a Trotsky in command. Just how different, see the history of Russia since 1917.

Work and Play

MH in BF 204 states that "as anarchists we are interested in the abolition of work. That doesn't mean that essential jobs won't have to deon, such as the preparation of food, shelter, fuel, entertainment,etc, but that these should be done as play rather than work." (p14). Although I do not object to the idea that elements of payfulness can be part of performing wokr, or that sometimes we might play while at work, the notion that work and play can be one and the same thing is mistaken. "work should be pleasureable" is in my opinion the more correct statement.

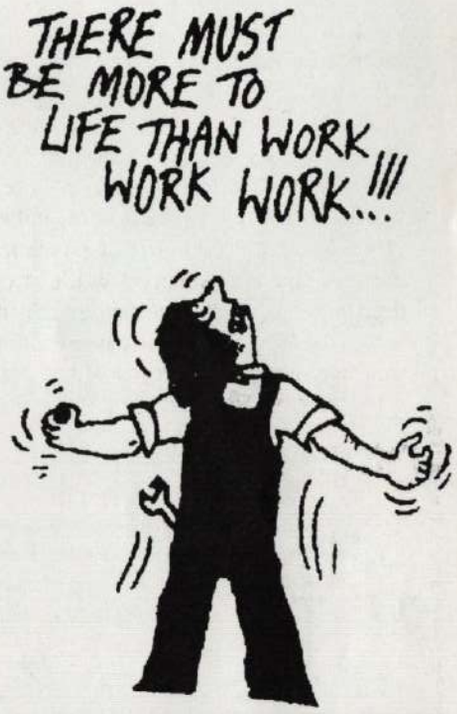
Pleasure as a concept was dealt with by the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle. Aristotle thought that pleasure was not an abstract phenomenom but was associated with a particular activity. When a person is engaged in a particular activity, such as redesigning a Wankel rotary engine or playing with one's children, the activity becomes pleasurable when it is performed fully and without interruption. If you are being pressurised by your boss, or your children are irritable through a tummy upset, then both work and play can be performed without pleasure. Pleasure, as it were, is the cream on the apple pie.

Moreover, the pleasure of fulfilling and engaging work is different from that gained from playing with your kids. Both activites have their intrinsic pleasures which can be experienced, when they are undertaken in an autonomous and free manner with our full attention and free from annoying distractions. There are many reasons why work is not pleasureable in our present capitalist society but to confuse work and play by insisting that play is always pleasureable or that an unpleasant work environment can be replaced by turning the workplace into a playpen is nonsense.

Play and work both have a necessary role in the fabric oif human society but they are not the same thing. What we want is a pleasurable and fulfilling working and social environment. Extremely unpleasant and laborious work should be pleasurable, and indeed can be, if it is undertaken by free workers, working co-operatively on socially necessary projects for the good of society or their community.

There is also some confusion between labour and work. The preparation of food, shelter, fuel etc, is in my opinion the labour that makes more intellectually demanding work (and trivial playfulness) possible. Of course we can experience pleasurable work (and play) if we try out a new recipe while preparing the evening meal. The mundane and humdrum labour used in the growing of basic essentials like rice, potatoes and wheat is an activity of an entirely different order. This labour can be pleasurable, but not when it is undertaken under compulsion for 60 hours a week and starvation wages. My understanding of an anarchist society is that the burden of labour should be shared more equally throughout all members of society and be performed in a co-operative manner. If this was the case, everyone could enjoy the pleasures of physical labour as well as have more time for play and to engage in more intellectually demanding and fulfilling work.

Graham Purchase,
Australia.



Answers to Quiz

1. The PM's fate would depend on the sovereign's will and whether he could command a majority in the Commons, not on his sanity (unless like Castlereagh he cut his own throat). William Pitt the Younger (Lord Chatham) went mad while Prime Minister. George III kept him on, going mad himself and the pair of them ran the country at war, both stark raving bonkers, until the king decided he was an oak tree, and Pitt died.

2. George V said it to J. H.Thomas, Home Secretary in the first Labour government. Owing to psittacosis the import of parrots was banned except to zoos. Thomas explained apologetically Labour's equalitarian policy meant it had to apply to the indignant king too, but he could get over it if the king consented to designating Buckingham Palace a "private zoo" (which in a way it is).

3. The powerless citizens of Mexico City were invaded by thousand of armed Indian guerrilla rebels from the jungle, who went from door to door asking for food, drink and shelter after their long journey, expecting to be treated like guests in the way their own visitors were, instead of looting and raping as was customary with disciplined armies of civilised nations.

4. Eamonn De Valera, first Taoiseach and then President of the Republic; General Leopoldo O'Donnell, Spain's Prime Minister in the mid-19th century; Lola Montez (Eliza Maria-Dolores Gilbert) who for two years dominated the anti-clerical 'Lola Ministry' in Munich until the 1848 revolution.

5. In the rush he forgot his wife. Queen Ena had to pick up the kids and make her own way by train amid jeers after he sped off by car. She understandably never lived with him after that.

6. Though employed on a casual basis and liable to blacklisting, Middlesbrough dockers, opposing the unprovoked imperial war on China, refused to load scrap iron and steel on to a Japanese boat, the 'Haruna Maru'. Efforts to recruit the unemployed to load the boat at double rates and switching it to other ports were in vain.

THERE IS NO WORKING-CLASS ANY MORE !!

WE ARE ALL MIDDLE-CLASS NOW

....well, except for....

the bus driver
receptionist and
the waitress
at the coffee shop
and the cook,
the kid washing
dishes, the woman
at the checkout
the taxi driver
the mechanic
the shop assistant,
the man who drives
the bread van,
the kids who sleep
in the park, the
unemployed working-class, the pickers
and all the rest of us who do the bloody work !!!

the secretary, the
typist, the cleaner,
the station assistant,
the shunters and
drivers, the labourer
the window cleaner,
the truckie, the milko,
the usher, the dero,
the butcher, the baker
the man who reads the
meter, the librarian,
the prostitute, the
migrant women in the
factories, the gardener, the
road worker, the fitter,
the farm workers